



Members Update for August 4th, 2022

Just a few quick updates for all of you. Hopefully most of you are off on holidays and enjoying some good times away from work and all the furniture cleaning, wall cleaning, vent cleaning, smells of stripper and wax and everything else we deal with over summer cleaning! I'll be taking some vacation starting next Tuesday August 9th and won't be returning until August 24th. While I'm away, Patrick Cumbo and Pat Amatangelo will be looking after all decisions for the Local with the help of other Exec members and stewards.

OSBCU & Central Bargaining : The OSBCU Bargaining Team lead by Laura Walton and her excellent team met with the Crown and CTA on Monday and made proposals on our behalf. As part of the commitment to transparency, each day the OSBCU meets with the Crown and CTA they are providing all OSBCU members and the public with an account of what happened during bargaining. You can sign up for those updates to come directly to your personal email by filling out a quick form you can find by [clicking here](#). You'll receive the same information as everyone else at the same time they do. I'll include Monday's update for you at the end of this update, but I strongly encourage you to sign up yourself so you know exactly what's happening at the Central Table.

Local Bargaining - Tomorrow, members of your Local Bargaining Committee (who aren't on vacation) will be meeting with the HWDSB (as we are required by law to do). There will be no Local proposals being exchanged on Friday. The purpose of Friday's meeting is to simply clarify and go over the Central/Local split when it comes to bargaining items we can/can't talk about Locally as well as agreeing to terms on how we will bargain. Last time, members of your Bargaining Team couldn't talk about anything that was proposed during bargaining. We could only present the end result to everyone. This time, we'd like to see that changed and be more transparent with all of you during the process and hopefully the HWDSB will as well. I will do my best to update you all on Monday before I leave for vacation on what was agreed to between the parties.

4153 Needs YOU - While we all hope that job action isn't necessary in the fall and that discussions at the Central and Local bargaining tables get us the results we deserve, it would be foolish to rely on just that and not have an alternative plan of action. Part of that plan of action is making sure the Local is prepared for any type of job action at all. That takes a lot of people. A lot. Exec have their own jobs to look after. Stewards have their own jobs to look after. All of these tasks need to be spread out among all members. Every OSBCU Local across the province is preparing the same way to be ready for whatever happens.

We are going to need people in 4 main areas and YOU can help out and be part of our support system. OSBCU has outlined things in a document that I'll share with you at the end of the update. If you're interested in getting involved, please get in touch with one of our lead mobilizers (Jay Atkinson & Laurie Penner) or please email the office at cupelocal4153@bellnet.ca

Please read the attachment at the end of the update to see if any of the 4 areas might be something you're interested in getting involved with!

I've had the opportunity to get around to a few schools over the past few weeks and talk with some of you about bargaining, summer cleaning and a bunch of other issues and it's been great. I really want to thank and encourage all of you for the work you're doing day in and day out. Even though we have a number of schools without a/c and we seem to be having at least one heat alert every week now – you're all making great progress in your schools and things are looking fantastic. While Dougie is at his cottage and Lecce is out posing for selfies, we are the ones who are truly working hard to have students back in school in a safe, clean and comfortable environment. In a few short weeks we'll be welcoming our co-workers back and then students – and we'll be ready.

I hope you all have some time to be away from work and take a drive, go fishing, see some family members you haven't for a while or even take a lifelong dream trip. Work is important and when we're here, we give it our all. But when you're not at work, I hope you're giving it your all as well – to have fun and enjoy the company around you!

Cheers,

Blake



Do you want to win a real wage increase in contract negotiations? Better job security?

Benefit improvements? More staff to address workload and improve services for students?

Join the regional and local strike committee!

To win improvements to wages, benefits, and working conditions, CUPE OSBCU education workers across Ontario are building worker power. The strike committee is the committee that will organize your local union's strong and effective participation in a strike to win if necessary.

What are the different roles on the local strike committee?

Each local should have at least one member on each of the four Regional Strike Committees. These are the four pillars of the strike organization. These members will perform the same roles in the event of a local strike.

1. **Administration committee:**
Coordinate all elements of the strike including the regional strike headquarters.
2. **Regional finance committee:**
Manage solidarity donations and ensure that strike pay paperwork is organized by local.
3. **Communications committee:**
Ensures all members have information about bargaining and strike updates; 2-way communication from members back to central strike committee; ensures an effective method of rapid communication with all members.
4. **Picketing committee:**
Makes decisions about location of picket lines and registers members to picket, responsible for reviewing accommodation requests and ensuring strong picket lines with high morale.

In addition to representation on each of the four Regional Strike Committees, local strike committees include **member organizers** whose role is to have conversations with members about the issues that matter most to them and what it will take to win. Member organizers are responsible for organizing a supermajority of members to withdraw their labour in the event of a strike and participate in the strike. **This is the most important role on the local strike committee and we need as many member organizers as possible.**

Each local also has a **Local Finance Committee**. The Local Finance Committee responsible for ensuring that all members performing strike duties receive strike pay.

We also need many **picket captains** to coordinate member participation in pickets and keep picket lines safe and fun. There will be picket captain training on September 8, 15 & 17. You need to attend 1 of these 3 dates for training.

For more information about the different roles on the strike committee or to join the strike committee please contact: [insert contact info for Local Strike Committee Chairs or Co-Chairs]



CUPE Ontario School Boards Council of Unions (OSBCU)

Summary of education workers' bargaining proposals for better working and learning conditions in Ontario's publicly funded schools

Wage increases of \$3.25/hour in each year of the collective agreement

- Education workers wages were cut by more than 11% (in real terms) from 2012 to 2021 through legislated wage freezes and restrictions on wage increases.
- Inflation over the next 3 years is projected to be at least 15-17% (and is currently over 8% this year alone), and projections on inflation keep going up.
- Education workers earn an average of \$39,000, 84% earn less than \$50,000 per year, more than half are required to work at least one additional job to make ends meet.

Pay casual and temporary employees the same rate as permanent employees

- Workers should receive equal pay for equal work.
- Some employees classified as "casual" or "temporary" by school board managers, earn several dollars per hour less than a permanent employee doing the same job.
- School boards are having difficulty filling positions because of low wages. This is worse with positions they advertise as temporary or casual

Require each school board to have a minimum staffing complement and limit boards' ability to cut staffing levels and the services provided to students

- This is our "job security" proposal, which is actually a service security proposal that would ensure staffing levels do not go below an established minimum to meet student needs
- Students rely on education workers to support their education success and keep their schools clean and safe.
- In the absence of job security/service security, boards regularly cut staff even when students and schools need them – and often even when they have the money to fund these services and jobs.

Guarantee a Designated Early Childhood Educator is assigned to every Kindergarten class

- All kindergarten students deserve to have the benefits of the two-educator model of full-day kindergarten education (DECE and teacher). DECEs have expert knowledge of early childhood development, observation skills, and assessment skills that five and six year old kids need to succeed.
- Currently if a kindergarten class has fewer than 16 students there is no requirement to have a DECE in the class.
- School boards often play with classroom placements to minimize the number of DECEs employed, denying the two-educator model to many students.

Funding to create new jobs to enhance the services provided to students

- Continuation of all funding negotiated in 2019 to ensure that jobs created in the last round of bargaining will be sustained.
- \$100 million in new funding to create additional jobs that will improve the services provided to students and schools, which could create 1500-1700 new jobs.
- More EAs will help students with different needs to succeed, more custodians will help keep schools clean and safe, more library workers will help student learning and reading skill development, more trades workers will help keep schools in a better state of repair, more school secretaries will help schools run more effectively. This list of additional services that could be provided is virtually endless.

Establish minimum weekly hours of work for full-time education worker jobs

- The standard work week for full-time Educational Assistants, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Child and Youth Workers, and other positions is 35 hours per week, but some boards schedule full time staff for as little as 30 hours per week.
- Full-time custodians, tradespersons, information technology professionals, board office staff, and others have a standard work week of 40-hours per week, but some boards provide full-time staff with fewer hours.
- Denying hours to workers leads to unpaid work, and includes (but is not limited to) workers doing unpaid prep time on a regular basis. On average, CUPE-OSBCU education workers work 92.4 minutes of unpaid work per week – the equivalent of not being paid for two weeks of work per year.
- Shortened work weeks are another form of understaffing that denies students and schools the supports they need.

Establish minimum standards on vacation, leaves of absence, and other conditions of employment

- All of these terms of employment have been effectively frozen since 2012, and all must be addressed at the central bargaining table.
- Workers who organized new bargaining units since then have been unable to make improvements to match what other CUPE-OSBCU education workers have been able to achieve.
- As a matter of fairness all workers should be entitled to similar terms and conditions of employment. Establishing minimum standards for all school boards is a step in that direction.

Funding increases to allow for improvements to benefits

- Explore the possibility of extending benefits to members who are currently not eligible for benefits or enrolled in the benefits plan. Currently, almost all members who are classified as temporary or casual are not eligible for benefits.
- Additional funds to cover the increasing costs of medications and health and dental services

Paid prep time for employees whose core duties are directly related to student/learner instruction

- Many workers who work directly with students don't receive paid prep time for their work. As a result, they do a substantial amount of unpaid work.
- Paying for prep time is a recognition of the value of the contributions of front-line workers to student achievement

Violence prevention training and recommendations to prevent violence in schools

- Preventing violence in schools is important for students and workers alike.
- A 2021 report on violence in the workplace recommended adequate resources for students (including staffing levels), supports for education workers to address their physical and mental health needs, and additional training for administrators to understand the magnitude of the problems of violence in schools.
- One key way of preventing violence in education workplaces is to have an adequate number of staff.

The above is a very short summary of key bargaining proposals tabled by CUPE-OSBCU frontline education workers. The summary does not capture all details of each proposal, nor does it capture every single proposal that was presented to the Council of Trustees Associations and the Ministry of Education negotiators. For the full package of proposals tabled on August 2, 2022, please visit the OSBCU website at osbcu.ca.