



Quick Update for January 27th, 2023

OSBCU Classification Meeting – Before we all got wrapped up and involved in Central Bargaining, protests, ratification votes and whatever else has gone on for the past year, OSBCU had a good idea – put people who do the same job together from across the province to share ideas, decisions and more with each other. The idea worked great and anyone who was a part of the first few meetings walked away with a better understanding of different practices and policies for the same workers from different Locals. School boards and their management teams talk with each other all the time – why shouldn't the workers?! Well, they are resuming the classes again and **there's a Custodial Meeting coming up in a few weeks that you can register for online. The meeting will be held using the Zoom platform and you can find the registration link by clicking [HERE](#).**

Covering Head Caretakers – On Tuesday an email went out to some of our members from Elizabeth Pannycad in Facilities. The email was asking members who already hold the qualifications to cover for a head caretaker if they would be interested in covering day shifts. This is not a guarantee of working day shifts. This is not an offer to go on permanent day shifts. This is a request to see if qualified members are interested in covering when needed. If you did not receive the email, you are not qualified to cover a head caretaker. Our union is based on seniority and qualifications and only those qualified for certain jobs should be covering them, period. With the employer implementing EasyConnect it has definitely posed challenges and it's good to see the employer actively working towards making proper coverage a priority. In the future, you can expect a change in EasyConnect to only show you jobs that you are qualified for, which is exactly what should be happening.

Elementary Classroom Cleaning – **2nd week reminder** Regardless of whether or not we're in the midst of a global pandemic or if there hasn't been a sick student or staff member at your school in months – parts of our jobs don't change. One part is cleaning elementary desk tops. Even before Covid – disinfecting & cleaning elementary desk tops was part of the daily schedule for classroom cleaning and it continues to be today. Kids eat at their desks and they work at their desks. During the day, it's up to the class to look after their desk tops. After hours – it's our job to make sure it's clean and disinfected for the following day. If you have certain classrooms that seem to take longer than others because of the mess left behind at the end of the instructional day – set a timer on your watch or phone for 20 minutes. Start cleaning the classroom and when the alarm goes off, move on to the next classroom whether you're finished or not.

Secondary Classroom Cleaning – Secondary schools operate on a 2nd day cleaning schedule as a result of cost cutting way back in the 90's. Classroom cleaning is split up into 2 sections within a section. Half of the section gets a full cleaning, the other gets a partial cleaning. The next day, it is reversed. And it goes back and forth and back and forth again and again all year long.

On the full cleaning days, garbage is done, the room is swept, spot mopped, desks cleaned and disinfected, etc.

On the half cleaning days, the garbage is emptied, any large debris is swept off the floor and any spills are spot mopped.

On the half day cleaning, the enhanced cleaners assigned to secondary schools are to clean & disinfect the desks. So this year, every desk across the HWDSB should be cleaned and disinfected every day.

Members who are covering absences in secondary locations should check with other staff to make sure they are fully cleaning the right rooms according to the schedule on the day they are covering.

Union Meetings – Our January union meeting was scheduled for last weekend. We made plans, booked the hall, printed off agendas & minutes and it was all for nothing. We didn't have the required number of people (23) attending to have the meeting. So, we went ahead and had an informal question/answer and comment session for those that were there. This is happening more frequently lately and as part of trying to have more involvement, new ideas, new strategies and learning from members about what's happening in their locations – we need to look at the way we have our union meetings. Later this morning around 9am you'll receive an email from Simply Voting and no, it's not for an election. It's for you to give us feedback on if you attend, why you don't attend, when would work better to hold meetings, how many meetings we should be having, etc. The poll will be open until Tuesday at 5pm so please take 2 minutes to give us your thoughts so we can plan out the best way forward for the Local when we look at our Bylaws again after local bargaining is wrapped up and completed.

Protest Days & Sick Days – Last week I was alerted to the fact that the employer had deducted sick days from members for the two days we were protesting Bill 28 which would have forced a contract on us and violated our Constitutional rights. Those days were taken in error by the employer as sick days. After a few emails and phone calls, it seems that the error has been corrected and all sick days should be accurate now. Please take a minute to look in your web portal sick days history and make sure that on November 4th and 7th there should be two entries. You'll see where a sick day is charged to you and then on the same day it should show as being reversed – making it equal again. If you don't see those entries and it looks like you're still down a few sick days, please let our office know and we will ensure that the entries are corrected to reflect your actual use of sick days.

Snow Removal Precautions – Tomorrow when we're back to work there will be snow to clear and it's everyone's responsibility. The only exception is if a member has an approved accommodation plan on file with the Wellness Dept. Everyone else should be helping to get our walkways, entrances, steps and fire exits cleared and salted. Do some stretches before digging into a pile of heavy, wet snow with a shovel. Lift with your legs. If you've been trained and are comfortable operating a snowblower – consider wearing some hearing protection and be sure that there is a jam stick on your snowblower in case you run over a bundle of newspapers or a rock. Snow clearing can be a good reason to be outside and working as a team but please remember that it needs to be done safely. **If you would like to know how to operate a snowblower – contact your supervisor and ask them to show you – it is the responsibility of the employer to safely train employees using equipment. While it may be easier and quicker to ask a co-worker, that's not recommended. Get your supervisor to do their job according to the Occupational Health & Safety Act.**

Local Bargaining Change – The employer has cancelled our weekend bargaining on February 11th & 12th. As of right now we only have one day of bargaining on the books and that's next Friday, February 3rd. We are waiting on alternative dates from the employer as we are all eager, willing and ready to get a deal done for all of you.

Pizza boxes – However much you like pizza and the environment, they really don't go together. Pizza boxes are garbage items due to the grease, sauce and cheese that gets on them. They are not to be recycled. If your school recycling team isn't aware of this – there does seem to be some confusion in the posters & handouts – please let them know so they can separate them on site.

Cheers,

Blake