



CUPE 4153 Update

September 26th, 2024

Christmas Party & Donations (3rd and Last Notice)

Our social committee has been making plans for both our adult and kids Christmas parties and tickets for the adult party are available by calling Janna in the office or by reaching out to Laurie Penner or Kristin Cox. It's important to say that this isn't just a social outing to encourage our members to get out and enjoy themselves together - it's also raising funds for the kids Christmas party and purchasing gifts for the kids, supplying food and entertainment as well. **Last year we canceled the Christmas party due to lack of interest. We don't want to do that again but we need to get tickets sold and that needs to happen by October 15th. If we don't have enough tickets sold - the adult party will be canceled again and to be honest, might be the end of the social committee and any of the get togethers, dinners, walks, etc that they've organized in the past.**

On that note - if any of our members have connections to local businesses or organizations that would be able to help with donations of gift cards, products or services we have a letter drafted and ready to give to businesses outlining what the donation is for and what we do as a Local. Those are available by calling or emailing Janna in the office.



In Case You Missed It

For those that didn't make it out to our union meeting this past Sunday - here's a quick recap for what you missed:

- Approval from membership to install a sign with CUPE 4153 on the building we have our office in
- Statement from the Executive about the importance of training and how we need to make sure all of our elected reps have the proper training and confidence before assigning them issues to handle on an individual basis for members and that's going to be our focus for the next 12-18 months.
- Nominations and Elections - welcome to Robert Desperak (3 year Trustee), Chris Cosby (Steward), Renate Schrank (Steward), Jennifer Stokes (Steward), Nolan Balibalos (Health & Safety) & John Monin (Health & Safety). Help me in welcoming them to your elected team to represent and advocate for you! The new full list of elected positions is available on our website for you to print off and post in your caretaking office.
- We had a good time before the meeting started with our National Rep Kathleen taking questions about sick days and members of your Executive were on hand to help with other workplace questions for anyone who showed up early. Everyone seemed to have a good time and it was good to see people talking and sharing so I think we'll do it early again next month!

A Well Deserved Thank You

Earlier this week, the HWDSB Board of Trustees had a meeting and all of you were mentioned many times over and thanked for all the hard work that you accomplished over the summer. The Director shared a video that most of us missed just before school started only because many of us were working right up to and including Labor Day to get our schools ready. That video can be seen [here](#) and the Chair of The Board, Maria Felix Miller also shared her personal thanks during the meeting. I wasn't in attendance but did have a fellow union president text me during the meeting telling me that the thanks and praise was being heaped on our members.

Here's what Chair Miller had to say - "I, too, would like to take an opportunity to welcome our families and our staff officially back with my Chair's report. I wanted to highlight, as it was mentioned in the [Director's] video message that we just heard, specifically the caretakers who worked all summer long

to do jobs that often don't manage to get done throughout the typical academic year. We know that they go above and beyond. I had the pleasure of bringing greetings to our caretakers on their PD session in July, and it's always a highlight of my year to connect with staff and to thank them in person, for the incredible amount of work that they do. They really are the reason that our schools are safe and clean, and ready to be centres of learning and centres of community..."

You all deserve a huge thank you for the work we accomplished over the summer and continue to do each and every school day to support a safe, clean and comfortable learning environment for students across our city and the surrounding suburbs.

And Lastly....

I'll be on vacation for a week of fishing, hiking and mushroom hunting (not THOSE mushrooms) starting tomorrow and Pat Amatangelo will be on a much needed vacation across the ocean starting Friday as well. Until I come back, Geoff Thompson will be in charge of things. So there won't likely be an update next week, but you never know....

I want to share a feel good story from my own school. Last week we had an incident on the playground at nutrition break that unfortunately left one student with bear or pepper spray in his eyes. Admin staff brought him inside and were trying to get him to use the eyewash station without any success. The eyewash station is in the science room beside our caretaking office and Dave Rees was around the area and stepped in to help out. Dave talked with the student and tried to convince him it was ok and understandably the student was hesitant. It's not easy to hold your eyes open when the natural reaction is to close them in water. So, Dave being the kind of guy he is, took off his glasses and stuck his own face in the eyewash station and the student got a laugh out of it and Dave told him, now you try it. After a few dunks in the eyewash station and a few minutes went by, the student was feeling much better. All thanks to Dave being a bit goofy and recognizing what kind of encouragement the student needed - even if it was a bit unconventional.

Our students see us day in and day out and get to recognize us and know us. Never forget the impact we can have on a student's day at school. A fist bump, a simple smile and hello or even a dunk in the eyewash station may be all that kid needs to turn a bad day to a good day. Thanks Dave for going the extra mile!

Cheers,
Blake