



CUPE 4153 Update

April 11th, 2025

Our Local Bylaws

Last Thursday I sent out all the documents to prepare everyone for a review of our bylaws and consideration of new proposals submitted by members. The deadline for submitting bylaw proposals is next Thursday, April 17th. The Bylaw Committee will be meeting to review all the proposals submitted and check them against the National Constitution. A list of approved proposals will be provided to members to consider before our Bylaw Meeting on May 3rd. This is an opportunity for all members to have a voice in how our Local operates and governs itself. The meeting to review, discuss and vote on Bylaw proposals will be held on May 3rd from 9am to noon at the HWETL office where we have our monthly union meetings (105 Nebo Road).

OSBCU Survey

For those of you that haven't been around for long - the OSBCU is the Ontario School Board Council of Unions. They are the bargaining representative for 57,000 CUPE School Board workers across Ontario. They bargain certain terms in our 2 part Collective Agreement that deal with our wages, benefits, vacations, etc. Our current contract expires August 31st, 2026 and the cycle of bargaining has already begun on our side. The OSBCU is looking for input towards what their goals in bargaining will be for next year. YOU are the members they need to hear from. YOU are in the schools doing the work on a day to day basis. YOU deal with staff shortages. YOU are the boots on the ground they need to hear from.

As part of the organizing/mobilizing exercises all Locals did last time before bargaining - OSBCU is following the same pattern this time around and asking Locals to have at least a 60% participation rate in the survey. I would like to think that everyone would want to put in their two

cents worth about what's most important to them in the workplace, but I know from experience that isn't the case. I know we can get to 60% on this survey though.

To get through the survey, it should take you about 10 minutes. What's 10 minutes out of your week to tell the people who face off against the government about our next contract about what you think is important for the safety, security and finances of our members across the province?

What's right in front of us now is facing the same government who tried to use the notwithstanding clause against us and force us back to work and legislate a contract on us with no bargaining. We bargain early in the process to get what OUR members have made priorities - not get left with the scraps from others and their bargaining priorities.

You can find the survey by clicking [HERE](#). **Please DO NOT share this link or survey on social media as per requests from OSBCU to keep the survey responses limited to CUPE School Board workers.**

T4a Info

Thanks to our 2nd VP Geoff Thompson, here's some info for members and their tax returns on how to get a copy of your benefits contributions amounts for your taxes! Members can go visit the OTIP website help center [HERE](#) and search for T4a. The process looks pretty easy and you can print off or download your T4a for your taxes!

A Change To The Workplace

A few weeks ago when I was away at the OSBCU Convention, I got an email and a follow up call from management asking if the Local would be open to a change in practice around the end of vacations. In the past, it was an unwritten rule that when you came back from vacation, you had to set foot in your building before you went back on the overtime wheel and could work rental overtime.

After hearing from a few members on this issue, management decided that practice should be changed and reached out to me. To clarify - as per 18.04 in the collective agreement, the employer did not want to include vacation as an absence. Their proposal makes sense and benefits our members.

I sent an email to all elected reps while in Ottawa explaining what happened to bring about the change and that we were in agreement with it. What I forgot to do was bring you all up to speed through an update and I will apologize for the delay in doing that.

In the meantime I've been accused of manipulating and changing the collective agreement on my own which is absolutely absurd and anyone with any experience in a union environment should know just how ridiculous that is. When the employer approaches us for agreement on something that benefits our members, we have an obligation to explore it.

Moving forward - for permanent members taking vacation - if your vacation ends on a Friday and you are scheduled to work rental overtime on the weekend - you are now able to either work that weekend rental overtime because your vacation ended sometime on Friday OR you can decline the weekend rental overtime and return to work on Monday. The choice is up to the member now, not management which I think is a much better position to be in and the Executive agreed.

Union Representation

I wanted to take a few minutes to address the issue of union representation - who from the Local represents members in investigation, grievance or termination meetings.

The Local provides representation to any member for any official meetings with the employer. Why? We are the sole bargaining representative for our members. The Local is the owner of any grievances once they are filed.

When we get meeting requests from supervisors - all stewards have the opportunity to respond and attend meetings depending on their availability, schedules and personal time. Stewards also have the option to decline meetings if they don't feel they can represent a member properly.

Members can request an elected rep to represent them but that is not a right. In most cases, the rep assigned to a situation will follow that through the whole process and not change.

Your elected reps all have access to each other, our stewards, health & safety committee and your Executive members. We bounce questions and what if's off of each other frequently by phone or in group chats. The collective knowledge and experience we have is amazing and diverse and it's a great thing to see members who got elected to gain some confidence and education through

our training sessions and then work in pairs to attend meetings to get a feel for how things go, meeting the players on the other side of the table, get used to taking notes of the meetings and then have them attend meetings on their own and do well and begin to understand and put into practice what it takes to be successful in their position.

I can assure you this - if an elected rep has been assigned by myself or Pat Amatangelo to attend a meeting and represent you - we have the confidence in them being there based on a number of factors. We are functioning as a group to protect and assist our members across the board.

Cheers,

Blake