



October 2022 Newsletter

EWSC Executive Team Members

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Staff Advisors

- Janice Janzen
- Alex Lenko

Upcoming EWSC Events

- CUPE SK All-Presidents' Meeting
November 4, 2021
Delta Hotels by Marriott
Regina, Saskatchewan
- EWSC Town Hall Zoom Meeting
November 7, 2022 @ 7:00 pm
- EWSC Annual Conference
May 3 – 5, 2023
302 MacLachlan Avenue
Manitou Beach

EWSC Videos

EWSC has released the CUPE Interview videos on YouTube. Here is the link to them:
<https://heartofourschools.ca/>

Heart of Our Schools

We have officially opened the EWSC campaign site. The link to the site is: <https://heartofourschools.ca/>

Virtual Town Hall November 7, 2022



Join CUPE education workers for a virtual town hall meeting to discuss the impact education cuts are having on students and staff. We will examine the education funding model, and talk about the path forward.

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtdeisqjlqGtxKrs5kju8niIZHcmeRKd3D>

CUPE Survey

Dear CUPE Local Unions in the Education Sector:

CUPE Saskatchewan Education Workers' Steering Committee launches survey to examine cuts.

Last spring, school divisions across the province announced cuts and layoffs due to another year of provincial under-funding. Now that the school year is underway, CUPE is conducting a public survey to look at the impacts these cuts are having on students and staff.

“Our school divisions and staff are dealing with the effects of austerity funding,” said Omar Murray, a bus driver in the Chinook School Division, and Chair of the CUPE Saskatchewan Education Workers’ Steering Committee. “We know this has an impact on students. This survey will provide a valuable snapshot of the situation in education.”

CUPE represents over 7,000 education support workers and is a strong advocate for the education system.

“CUPE members are there to support students, teachers, and administration. This survey will give us the information we need to effectively advocate for better education funding.”

We encourage everyone that is concerned on where the education system is going to please fill out the survey and to share.

The survey can be found at: www.heartofourschools.ca. Survey will close on November 5, 2022.

Thank you for participating in the survey!

Chairperson’s Report

Hello all, you may have heard that the EWSC is sporting a new chairperson. Rob Westfield has accepted a new job, which leaves him out of scope, so I have stepped up to assume the role of Chair.

I wish to thank Rob for his dedication to the EWSC cause and to the leadership that he showed us during his tenure. Rob stepped into the role at a time when COVID was just hitting its peak, so the challenges he faced were things that none of us expected. He managed to keep us focused during the whole balancing act of Zoom vs In-person meetings, which was no small feat. We thank him for his commitment.

I would also like to thank Teresa Hitchings for stepping into the role of Vice-Chair.

There will be a couple of changes to our annual schedule, these have been in the works for a bit. We are changing the timing of the annual conference to a spring setting. We have also hosted an All Presidents’ Meeting to the fall. With these new changes we hoped the timing will be more agreeable to our conference delegates.

This year should prove to be a very interesting one. While, on one hand, the quality of Education and health care are backsliding, mostly because of severe austerity budgeting from the province. Yet, on the other hand, the province has so much extra revenue they plan to give everyone a \$500 bonus just for being here. Who says you can’t buy votes, it worked for Ralph Klein in Alberta.

The timing for an austerity budgeting coming to a head could not be worse for our sector, as most of us are going into a bargaining year.

To that end the EWSC has set an All Education Presidents / Bargaining Panel meeting in an effort to show our members what is happening in other areas of Canada. It will also be the start of a new campaign highlighting the issue we face.

The national president of another union once told me that the best way to avoid job action is to prepare for job action. In these times of reckless cutbacks and having to do more with less ... sometimes the best way to help our students is to ensure that they have a good system of support staff to help them, ensure they have decent, safe places to learn and a safe way to get there (Okay I had to throw that one in).

We need to stand together. We need to support the members in other locals with expertise, advise and maybe just a Hi how are you doing. After all we are all in the same boat with the same goals in mind.

In Solidarity,
Omar Murray
(Acting) Chair EWSC

October 14 All President’s Meeting/ Bargaining Presentation

Questions to Presenters
(Kirsten (BC), Justin (BC), Morgan (MB))

1. Had the teachers already gone through conciliation when the locals agreed to follow them?
 - MB - The Locals agreed to wait until the decision came out in respect to the Teachers, as we historically have followed the Teachers in MB.
 - The Employer did threaten layoffs when negotiating the wage increases but that did not happen that I am aware of in our Locals.
2. How difficult was it to get Prov bargaining in BC?
 - The road to provincial bargaining was lengthy. There was a move to synchronizing contracts, then limited coordination among the locals, then increased coordination and then finally the move to form the president’s council. It took over a decade.
3. Were there any province wide campaigns to mobilize and engage members?
 - BC - yes there were province wide campaigns - we had a video about the importance of the work k-12 support staff do to ensure top quality public education for students, but also the challenges they face; we also had radio ads across the province; also the main public sector unions took out newspaper ads together talking about the rising cost of living - these ads had the logos of all five public sector unions that were in bargaining with the gvt at that time, which signaled we were not acting in isolation.

4. Were there threats of layoffs or reduced hours with the proposed increases?
- BC - at the provincial bargaining table no layoffs reductions - we include in our bargaining proposals that all wage increases etc be funded by the provincial government precisely so that the government can't say "ok we agree to x% wage increase" and then leave it up to districts to fund the increase - so whatever % wage increase we negotiate, the school districts will be funded to implement. That doesn't mean there aren't ever layoffs/reductions at the school district level, but that is a separate process and usually happens when districts do their annual budgets.

October 14 Small Group Discussion Report Back

What were your takeaways from the presenters

- Provincial bargaining.
- Must get all locals on board.
- Don't need the government on board.
- Need to have all locals in the province work together.
- Everyone on same page
- Not giving in
- Strength in numbers - all locals together more fighting power - larger voice - impacting more people
- Stronger bargaining - larger group - more power
- Coordinated bargaining - bargaining pact
- Face to face with members - so important - in person
- Talking to each other, common ground - issues communicated through
- Boards talk to each other - locals need to communicate more
- Attendance at Zoom meetings were up - more convenient -
- Need food to bring people together
- In rural areas - harder to get together face to face - larger area - get people there -

How can we mobilize our members

- Get people aware.
- Fire up the masses.
- Get them angry.
- Communication
- Get out and talk to them
- Tailgate meetings
- Flexibility - accommodate (virtual option) - rotate mtgs
- Provide food
- Share the reasons they need to care - possibility of strike/cuts/inflation concerns
- Get input from groups individually so each group feels heard and represented
- Online voting option
- Swag in exchange for contact information
- Having contact person at every location to share info and collect
- Use Poll Everywhere

- Continue to invite members to events, meetings, etc.
- Increases of communication / Zoom

How can we better coordinate bargaining proposals across the province

- Coordinating bargaining proposals.
- Join with other locals.
- "Me too" clauses for other locals or STF
- \$\$ increases instead of percentages
- EWSC was formed to coordinate provincial bargaining
- Less structured but more communication
- Provincial bargaining
- Drafting/voting on coordinated bargaining language at EWSC mtgs
- Sharing issues/proposals with EWSC
- Hold classification town hall meetings to hear issues from workers directly
- Hear updates through bargaining - open bargaining
- Create a forum (teams) for exec to communicate with each other
- Coordinate term expiry
- Utilize the all presidents meeting format to collect info from locals.
- Have to email local highlights out a head of time to the all presidents meeting
- Discussions at the spring conference
- Utilize the all presidents meeting format to collect info from locals.
- Have to email local highlights out a head of time to the all presidents meeting
- Discussions at the spring conference

Would a "best language" document be helpful

- Presidents come together across the province and come up with consistent language.
- All locals come up with it and follow it.
- Consistency.
- Yes
- Who has best language around "paid holidays"
- Yes
- Proposal the best language - we now have better language.
- Cost of living language

What can the EWSC do to assist locals

- Education
- Collaboration
- More events driven specific topics like bargaining.
- Hold classification town hall meetings
- Create a forum (teams) for exec to communicate with each other
- Have a proper website that includes local websties/social media
- Coordinate the best language document
- Continue all-presidents meetings
- Who settled - what they settled for

Communicate through Staff - to Guy - to EWSC - contracts to find better language - proposals may be the same - if one smaller local defers from that - takes less -

- Organize rallies at provincial legislature - constituency offices - have specialized days -

- read-in, a math day – education sit-in. – need to overhaul the funding.
- Communication strategies to coordinate points of interest in assisting locals with wages, leaves etc.
- Increase in Newsletter content

- Workload or work-related interpersonal incidents that are excessive and unusual in comparison to pressures and tensions experienced in normal employment. These must be beyond the normal scope of maintaining employment from a public perspective.

DID YOU KNOW

The Canadian Labour Congress teamed up with Western University and the University of Toronto to study the harassment and violence in the workplace. The study, which took place from October 2020 – April 2021, found that 71.4% of participants had experienced at least one form of harassment or violence in the workplace. For many education workers, this statistic comes as no surprise. But what constitutes violence or harassment?

Did you know, according to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), has a broad definition of what harassment and violence is?

According to the CCOHS, violence is not merely physical assault. It is defined as **any** act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated, or assaulted in their employment. Workplace violence can include, but is not limited to:

- **Threatening behaviour** – such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects
- **Verbal or written threats** – any expression of an intent to inflict harm
- **Verbal abuse** – swearing, insults or condescending language
- **Physical attacks** – hitting, shoving, punching, pushing or kicking

And yes, being spat on is a physical attack. We should also remember that these incidents of violence and harassment does not only take a toll on the victim but on witnesses of the incident.

To learn more about CCHOS workplace violence and harassment visit, <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence.html>

Physical harassment and violence are easy to understand, as the incident is felt and seen, but what about unseen effects such as mental health and wellbeing.

Did you know, workers in Saskatchewan have psychological injury coverage under Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation. You may be able to file a claim if you have experienced a single traumatic event or a series of traumatic events, such as:

- Direct exposure to actual or threatened death or serious injury to worker and/or others.
- An event or series of events that are specific or sudden and generally accepted from the public perspective as being unusually shocking or horrific.

To learn more about psychological injury claims for Saskatchewan Worker's Compensation visit,

<https://www.wcsask.com/psychological-injuries>

