

September 2014

Mobilized and ready to bargain!

On August 6, the government issued a regulation that recognized CUPE as an employee bargaining agent. At the same time, it established a council of employer bargaining agents, representing all four trustee associations. On Tuesday, August 19, the OSBCC served notice to bargain provincially.

Our first meeting with the province is scheduled for October 8 with a subsequent meeting on October 16. We anticipate that, in the initial meeting, we will set ground rules and establish a common understanding for moving forward.

Next, the parties will determine what issues will be discussed at the central table. The issues the OSBCC will be taking forward were determined by delegates at our February conference. If any proposals are not accepted for negotiations at the central table, we will send them to locals, where they will become proposals for coordinated bargaining. Therefore, local bargaining cannot start until what is being discussed at the provincial table has been determined.

Locals should be finalizing their proposals for local bargaining so we can all begin at the same time.

Timing is crucial in this round of negotiations. Above all, we are seeking a contract that respects the work that we do and fully recognizes our roles in making schools work.

Mobilizing to fight concessions

The first provincial bargaining mobilization training was a huge success. Representatives from locals across the province met from August 11th to 14th in Cornwall to share ideas for engaging members in the bargaining process; learn more about the importance of school board trustee elections in the lead up to October 27; and raise the profile of our work in our schools and communities.



Coming soon to an area near you: participants in OSBCC's first-ever provincial bargaining mobilization training, Cornwall, August 11th to 14th.

CUPE's Ontario School Board Coordinating Committee represents 55,000 workers in the province

We also examined the process for initiating job action to fight concessions. A reference binder was given to all participants with information on Bill 122, a provincial bargaining handbook for the OSBCC; and strike preparation. The binder has been sent out to all local presidents.

Area councils: The members who took part in mobilization training will form the core of the OSBCC's area councils. These members will act as a liaison between their local and the area bargaining support teams. They are key to ensuring that central bargaining issues are communicated and supported locally.

Elena Di Nardo, chair of the bargaining support committee, will work with committee members to coordinate mobilization efforts across the province.

Municipal and School Board elections: Municipal and school trustee elections are coming up. In the current political climate, we are encouraging our members more than ever to get involved in campaigning for candidates who value public services and value our work.

In brief:

OSBCC Bargaining levy: OSBCC area rep Patti Chapman has sent out reminders to locals who have not yet submitted their levy contribution for 2014. We recognize locals often do not meet in the summer and so will just now be having meetings where they can bring a motion to their membership for approval. Check out osbcc.ca – among other information, you'll find CUPE Researcher Paul O'Donnell's video about school board workers, with the video divided into segments by job.

Building the profile of our work – locals take action: Members of Local 5555 in Peterborough have participated in a build for Habitat for Humanity. Local 1022 in Belleville held a free movie and swim day for community members this summer. At both events, members distributed copies of My School Community activity book.

Labour Day and community Pride Days provided other opportunities for locals across the province. Share your pictures and ideas by e-mailing osbcc@cupe.on.ca with details of your profile-building event.

Benefits plan surpluses: Some employers have made application to the Ministry to access surpluses in the plans. If your members make co-payments to your benefits plan, members are entitled to their portion of that surplus; contact the OSBCC coordinator Jim Morrison for more information.

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