



CUPE CONNECTION

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President Wendy Johnson and National Service Representative Rob Hewitt working on a legal issue.



Budget Reductions

By: Treena Harley

Ministry order to find \$29 million in "administrative efficiencies" for 2015/2016.

The \$29 million funding reduction spread over 60 school districts, will put SD23's budget shortfall at approximately \$1.37 million as well as \$1.3 million the following year. The BC Liberals announced an increase to education funding but hidden in the fine print was incomplete funding. The "administrative efficiencies" savings is actually forcing the school districts to reduce their services to students.

School District No. 23 is forced to reduce services among many departments. At the April 29, 2015 Public Board Meeting, the trustees approved the following reductions to the 2015-2016 budget:

- Operations Dept. budget reduced by \$275,000
- Technology Software, Licensing and Maintenance reduced by \$100,000

- Clerical staffing allotment at the Board Office reduced by \$41,500
- Departmental budgets reduced by \$40,000
- SD Leadership Development budget reduced by \$21,000
- District level Administrative meetings budget reduced by \$20,000
- Food Service at HRES reduced by \$5,000
- District Employee Wellness sub-committee budget of \$10,000 be eliminated
- District Health & Safety Committee budget of \$5,000 be eliminated
- District Human Rights Committee reduced by \$3,000
- District Student Council budget be reduced by \$2,000

Please email Treena Harley with your personal email address to recording.secretary@cupe3523.ca if you would like to be included on the email list for CUPE Connection. (We can't use the District system for Union business). You can also access the newsletter at www.3523.cupe.ca and copies will be delivered to each worksite.

President's Message



Welcome to Issue 3 of CUPE Connection.

It's sometimes hard to believe that another school year has flown by! SD 23 experienced a rather strange year, with labour strife delaying fall start-up, 3 major projects not quite completed, and an unprecedented 2 snow days immediately following winter break.

For our members who have 10-month assignments, the school year is winding down, while members with 12-month assignments are gearing up for all of the behind the scenes work that happens during the summer months.

The paint program ramps up, and Custodians do the deep cleaning of our schools. Tradesmen and Technicians can get their work done without disrupting classes. The Grounds Department intensifies their care of all sites, and school buses are given full maintenance. Clerical staff complete registrations and records of all students in middle and high school. All of this work and more is done at a fast pace through summer break.

CUPE Local 3523 wishes all of our members – both 10 and 12-month, a safe and pleasant Okanagan summer.

In solidarity, Wendy Johnson
President, CUPE Local 3523

Contract Language Explained

Collective Agreement – Sick Leave and Family Illness

Sick Leave

Interpretation of one year is defined as the 12-month period from July 1 to June 30.

The terms of our sick leave plan can be found under Article 28(a): Short Term Disability Program in the Collective Agreement. Regular employees (permanent employees with benefits coverage) are entitled to 100% of their normal pay for the first six days absence due to illness in any one year. For any absences due to illness beyond 6 days, the employee will receive 66 2/3% of their normal pay for a period not exceeding 120 days. Employees may be required to produce a certificate from a doctor certifying that the employee is unable to carry out assigned duties due to the illness. The Employer will reimburse costs of obtaining a certificate when a receipt is submitted.

Family Illness

Article 33(g): Leave of Absence in our Collective Agreement explains this type of leave. Members often find this clause

confusing and misinterpret the language.

The illness must be of a member of the immediate family who resides with the employee, and no one other than the employee can provide for their needs. Family members are: parent, wife, husband, sister, brother, child, grandchild, grandparent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law and the birth parent of the employee's birth child. These relations include common-law and step relations.

The employee will be granted one day's leave with pay for each illness. Family illness can be utilized 3 times in one year – one day per illness to a maximum of 3 days. Family illness is deducted from the employee's sick leave (see above).

Employees may be required to produce a certificate from a doctor certifying the illness, and will have costs of obtaining the certificate reimbursed upon submission of a receipt. ■

MUNICIPAL PENSION WEBSITE

Each year employees are sent a member's benefit statement that provides a username (this is numerical) and temporary password for the Municipal Pension website mpp.pensionsbc.ca. The website is a valuable tool for members. As well as showing the date pension contributions started and earliest retirement date, it has a pension calculator that members can use to enter various retirement dates. The calculator will then show the amount of pension the member can expect for the retirement date entered.

MPP offers an afternoon seminar a few times per year that Payroll announces to employees through school email. The MPP website is explained in these seminars. ■



CUPE BEHIND THE SCENES



CEA's Janice Maaske and Breanne Romanko standing beside a bike that their students really enjoy riding down the halls of GMS. Sweet ride kids!



Have a look inside SD 23's mail truck. Organization at its finest! Each school has their own bin and deliveries are made every other day.

CUPE Member Highlight – Brenda-Lee Erickson

By: Treena Harley

Who: Brenda-Lee Erickson, Administrative Assistant for Student Support Services.

What: Brenda-Lee works with over 90 professional staff and 3 “super regional secretaries” and 2 “super secretaries” at the School Board office. It doesn't take long to come to understand how happy Brenda-Lee is to be doing what she does. It is very important for Brenda-Lee to make sure that students with diversibilities and their families get the best service possible from SD23. She has also been a member of the parent group, Advisory Council for Exceptional Students (ACES).

Where: Brenda-Lee has worked at the School Board office since she started with SD23. Her first position was as a printer in the printing department at SBO on the old KSS site. Her next positions were switchboard operator, then as a secretary for the Deputy Superintendent, the Communications Department and for 2 Directors.

When: Brenda-Lee started working for School District 23 in 1973. She has the highest seniority out of all CUPE members in the district!

Why: Brenda-Lee has been married to her husband Ron, for over 41 years! Ron is a school bus driver for SD23. We are very appreciative for both the Erickson's years of service.

Brenda-Lee and Ron have 3 children - Nathan, Matthew and Mikayla. Nathan is married to Susanne and has three daughters. Matthew lives in Kelowna with his wife Michelle and their son. Mikayla is in grade 11 and dances 4 days a week. Ron and Brenda-Lee will have much more time on their hands once Mikayla gets her N!

Brenda-Lee has seen a lot of changes in the district but what has not changed, she says, is working with such great people. All of us are extremely thankful for Brenda-Lee's experience and joy, and that has not changed either.



2015 EXECUTIVE

TABLE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - Wendy Johnson

VICE PRESIDENT - David Tether

SECRETARY TREASURER - Kieran Fahy

RECORDING SECRETARY - Treena Harley

SHOP STEWARDS

SERGEANT AT ARMS - John O'Flaherty

OPERATIONS – Dick Beetlestone

CLERICAL/LIBRARY ASSISTANT – 2 vacant positions

TRANSPORTATION – Duane Wheatley

STUDENT SUPPORT – Margaret Varga and 1 vacancy

CUSTODIAL – Jim Anderson

GENERAL – Allan Miller

TRUSTEES

Ian Gordon
Sandra Ryan
1 vacancy

OFFICE CLERICAL – Shirley Fears

CUPE NATIONAL REP – Rob Hewitt

211 – 1889 Springfield Road
Kelowna, BC V1Y 5V5

250-860-3523

Health & Safety Tips

Joint Health and Safety Committee

In British Columbia, WorkSafeBC is responsible for keeping our workplace safe. Under the *Workers Compensation Act*, Part 3 Division 4, “An employer must establish and maintain a joint health and safety committee in each workplace where 20 or more workers of the employer are regularly employed.”

Membership of the joint health and safety committee must be made up of a minimum of 4 members and must consist of worker representatives and employer representatives. At least 50% of the committee members must be worker representatives. The worker representatives of the committee must be selected from workers at the workplace.

The committee must have 2 co-chairs. One selected by the worker representatives and the other chair selected by the employer representatives.

This committee must meet at least once a month. A member of a joint

committee is entitled to time off of work to prepare for meetings and to attend the meetings. They also have the right to annual educational leave up to 8 hours for occupational health and safety courses approved by WorkSafeBC.

The duties and functions of the committee are laid out in section 130. Of the 10 duties, some to highlight are; identify unsafe work conditions, consult with workers on issues regarding their occupational environment, to make recommendations, to participate in inspections and investigations.

If the joint health and safety committee submits a written recommendation to the employer, the employer must respond in writing within 21 days of receiving the request by indicating acceptance or reasons for not accepting the recommendation. The co-chair may then report to WorkSafeBC that there is no resolution.

If you do not have a CUPE rep for your Joint Health and Safety Site Committee, please contact Treena Harley, District Support Staff Safety Advisory co-chair at recording.secretary@cupe3523.ca



CUPE BC News

Metro Vancouver Transit Plebiscite

Vancouver region is asking voters yes or no on a new tax to finance transit expansion. It would be financed by half-per cent sales tax in the region to help pay for 10 years of transit improvements. As of the writing of this article, 50% of the 1.5 million eligible voters have mailed in their vote. The close of voting is May 29, 2015.

CUPE BC executive voted to support the “Yes” vote. Many of our CUPE members use transit to get to their jobs and an increase in the system will benefit them. More people using transit will benefit the environment. Also not to be forgotten are the vulnerable people in the region that the lack of good transit negatively affects.

The results are expected sometime this summer.

By: Treena Harley

Events

June 13, 2015

General Membership Meeting at
Hollywood Road Education Services
1040 Hollywood Road – Room 2

June 25, 2015

Last day of school

September 8, 2015

First day of school

September 19, 2015

General Membership Meeting at
Hollywood Road Education Services
1040 Hollywood Road – Room 2