

CUPE
EDUCATION
WORKERS

MAKING
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WORK



Members'
bulletin

November 2018

Getting ready for 2019



OSBCU members, CUPE staff and CUPE Ontario representatives send a message of solidarity to CUPE education workers across the province. Delegates from CUPE school board locals gathered at OSBCU's bargaining conference in Ottawa, November 3 and 4, to affirm the bargaining priorities for 2019's round of central bargaining.

OSBCU bargaining conference – gearing up for the challenges ahead

Thanks to everyone who attended the OSBCU bargaining conference in Ottawa, November 3 and 4.

After some frank and honest discussions on central bargaining priorities, locals and delegates affirmed the package, which OSBCU will take forward to develop central bargaining proposals.



These CUPE sisters know that education workers are Stronger Together.

Victory for education workers in OMERS!

CUPE members who have pensions with OMERS scored a big win in November, when OMERS members from different unions voted down proposals to scale back their pension benefits.

Kudos to CUPE Ontario as well as to OSBCU mobilizer Christine Couture, who was at the forefront of the fight to keep OMERS indexing.

CUPE members belong to a union that will fight for their future.



CUPE Vice-President Yolanda McClean presents Stronger Together, the new toolkit for member mobilizing, to OSBCU's bargaining conference.

“We didn’t join a union to accept the world as it is”

CUPE researcher Dan Crow sketched some of the challenges and risks of bargaining in Doug Ford’s Ontario – privatization, contracting out, P3s, charter schools, individualized funding, amalgamation, “gains sharing” for raises, and attacks on sick leave and job security.

How to counter it all? Face-to-face engagement at the local level; community-based organizing to build broader support for public education; central and local proposals that improve the quality of education.

“The labour movement makes gains when we focus action on the things that make us strong, and that’s our members,” concluded Dan. “We didn’t join a union to accept the world as it is; we joined a union to change the world.”

CUPE Ontario president Fred Hahn paid tribute to past OSBCU president Terri Preston (pictured, right): “Our entire union and our movement is better because of her leadership.”



“Begin building strong relationships with your community”



Community organizer and activist Sean Meagher delivered his overview of Ontario’s PC government. His advice:

- All Ontarians share CUPE’s concerns for public services; the consequences of government cuts are key to CUPE members’ fightback against them.
- CUPE has members in every neighbourhood in the province; connect with community groups, parents’ groups, etc. to help them build the infrastructure to express their anger when they feel it.
- Begin building those relationships today. It’s slow, hard work, but the impact is invaluable.

CUPE Ontario political liaison Chris Watson echoed Sean’s call, urging CUPE education workers to “Think provincially – act locally.”

OCHU president and CUPE Ontario First Vice-President Michael Hurley had the room on its feet with his barn-burner of a speech, promising solidarity from OCHU and hospital workers with education workers.



Success stories from OSBCU bargaining convention

Electing our bosses: Dan Jackson, president of CUPE 1480, shared a story about his local's involvement in working to elect five progressive candidates for trustee at Limestone District School Board.



Todd Canning of CUPE 1734 has made getting members' up-to-date contact details a priority for his local. His local subscribes to e-mail marketing software to stay in touch with members and the local's website offers downloadable apps and a secure site for members.

Mapping our local: CUPE 5100 president Jenn Faulkner shared a photo of 5100's "situation room," which literally maps her local's presence and contacts in schools in the counties and municipalities served by Grand Erie District School Board.



Have your say in the government's Education Consultation

Have you filled in the provincial government's survey on education? (ontario.ca/page/for-the-parents)

It's part of the consultation on Education in Ontario; the focus isn't on quality of education or services, but that doesn't mean that CUPE members can't make those their focus:

1. When the survey talks about Efficient Price Setting, you can share your opinion that quality of service is most important in Ontario's education system.
2. Questions about accountability and value-for-money can be met with insistence on keeping profit out of education and that a public education system must be served by public-sector workers.
3. Sections that ask about education funding efficiencies can be answered with comments about years of underfunding and austerity that have left Ontario students with crumbling schools, increasing classroom violence, and reduced staffing that leaves schools, parents and students underserved.

For more assistance, contact your local president or your local's National Representative.

Coming up

OSBCU's convention takes place from January 29 to February 2 at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Niagara Falls - see you there!

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