



Upcoming events:

- OSBCU Leadership Conference @ Sheraton Parkway North - December 3 - 5, 2021
- Spring School 2022 @ Toronto Sheraton Centre - February 28 - March 6, 2022
- OSBCU Convention @ Caesars Windsor - March 21 - 25, 2022
- CUPE Ontario Convention 2022 @ Toronto Sheraton Centre - April 27 - 30, 2022
- OSBCU will also be providing school board specific training in mobilization and bargaining in the near future



OSBCU QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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From the President's Desk

I am so excited to see the first edition of the OSBCU newsletter out and in the hands of our members!

Communication and transparency are key when engaging with our members - be it a local president, or a newly hired casual in a local. Having people know what is happening within OSBCU and how they can get involved will only make us stronger as we move ahead.

I want to thank Liz James, OSBCU vice-president for Area 5 (Eastern Ontario), for taking on communications as part of her VP portfolio. Liz was excited to take the lead when, at OSBCU's strategic directions session in August, a quarterly newsletter was suggested. And I am excited to see how Liz conveys the world of OSBCU each quarter, letting our members see all that is happening in our world.

In this edition, Liz has spotlighted the amazing work of the OSBCU Equity Committee. There has been some amazing work happening within this committee. In fact, in March 2022 (just in time for our second newsletter edition) delegates to the OSBCU convention will be electing our first ever Equity Representative to sit our OSBCU Executive Board!

Also in this edition is a highlight of the recent research project that OSBCU and CUPE members supported. Researchers from the University of Ottawa have produced *In Harm's Way*, which will serve as a launch point for work that our newly appointed Health and Safety/Injured Workers Committee will be undertaking in the new year,

As you will see, there is so much going on in OSBCU and so much more to come. If you are interested in getting involved in any way, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at info@osbcu.ca - an engaged membership is a strong membership!

Take care and in solidarity,



Laura Walton

OSBCU Leadership Conference: December 3-5, 2021

As the OSBCU has evolved, so has the gathering and work that we do. What was once known as the Bargaining Conference has now been reimagined as the **Leadership Conference**. It is extremely important for delegates to come together to discuss and vote on upcoming central bargaining priorities; however, the need to mobilize our members at this time is also extremely important. We won't be successful in bargaining without a mobilized membership behind us. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to join us. We hope that you enjoyed this new format and found it useful.

Education Worker Wednesdays

Have you checked out members' profiles on Education Worker Wednesdays, found on OSBCU's Facebook page? (facebook.com/osbcucscso) It's a great way to feature CUPE education workers, get to know our union sisters, brothers and friends, and raise the profile of our work. OSBCU's Council Support Coordinator Mike Maguire is always looking for pictures and stories of education workers at work supporting students across this province. Please send submissions to mmaguire@osbcu.ca

In Harm's Way: our call to action

On November 8, the report [*In Harm's Way: The Epidemic of Violence Against Education Sector Workers in Ontario*](#) was released. It is the work of University of Ottawa researchers Dr. Chris Bruckert, Dr. Darcy Santor and Brittany Mario. The report focuses on violence experienced by CUPE education workers and is based on survey answers from almost 4,000 CUPE members in 2018-19 school year.

The report is sobering, but unfortunately the findings don't shock most people who work in education. No worker should face violence in their workplace. But the conclusion reached by these academics is that there is an epidemic of violence in our schools, and education workers are bearing the brunt of it.

"We need to keep this issue alive," says Dr. Bruckert, who urges CUPE education workers to use the report to raise awareness of the

problem of violence in schools and to help make it an issue in the upcoming provincial election.

A final note to education workers facing violence on the job: reporting is key to helping

to eliminate violence in schools. If you want to have a conversation, you need the data to back it up, because people need to know what is going on inside education.

Meet OSBCU’s Equity Committee



OSBCU Area 2 Vice-President Keith Levere took on the council’s Equity portfolio in 2020. Keith worked tirelessly with CUPE Ontario and CUPE National Equity Committee to get this important committee operating in OSBCU.

“The OSBCU Equity Committee is continuing in full gear and we began developing our strategic plan in October,” said Brother Levere. “This plan will line up with our terms of reference and objectives, vision, and goals as they are set out.

“We want also to recognize the OSBCU Executive from 2018 to 2020, and the new executive for being supportive and ensuring equity is within the fabric. Also, at OSBCU’s convention in March, we will be electing our first Equity Representative to the OSBCU Executive.”

Levere also recognized National Human Rights Representative Kimalee Phillip “for all her hard work and dedication towards our Equity Committee.”

The equity working group came together in the fall of 2020 when the COVID pandemic was still raging. When the group first met over Zoom, they were united in one common goal: equity for those who are marginalized.

“As our group progressed and we met in person, we had an organic conversation that involved talking about ways to help local presidents deal with equity issues, ways to help education workers bring equity issues to their locals, and equity issues that we have seen in our personal lives and in our locals and school boards,” said Brother Levere.

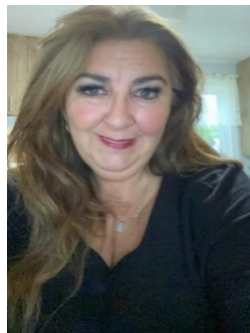
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OSBCU Equity Committee members

Chris Kaspiris, CUPE 1734



I am an education assistant with York Region District School Board. I joined the OSBCU equity working group as I felt that there is still a need for equity in school boards across Ontario. As a gay man, I still hear comments about queer individuals in my school board. As a member of the OSBCU Equity Committee, I represent the LGBTQ2S+ community, and I hope that I can help members of the queer community find the support they need within their school board.

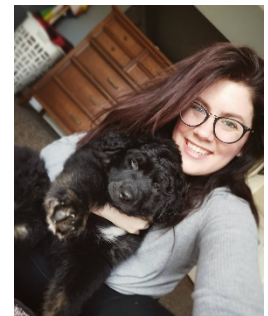
Jeannie Proulx, CUPE 5335



Hello, my name is Jeannie Proulx. I am the Francophone representative on OSBCU’s Equity Committee and I am secretary-treasurer for CUPE 5335 in Region 5. I’m involved in the committee because I believe I can uphold in positive way my Francophone values, as well as pluralism in all its forms. Together, we must value our differences.

Jacqueline Ouellette, CUPE 1348
(Pronouns: She/Her)

Jacqueline is a steward for CUPE 1348 and a secondary school secretary with the Greatest Essex County District School Board. Jacqueline is a young worker with a passion for activism inside and outside her union.



Girma Taffesse, CUPE 1280



A caretaker with Toronto Catholic District School Board, Girma says, “I wanted to be part of this group because I believe I can make a difference in addressing systemic racism and discrimination.”

Getting to know you better: profiles of OSBCU Equity Committee members

Holly Buffalo Rodrique, CUPE 8888



Boujour, wahchay, ahnii, namaste, hello. My name is Holly Buffalo Rodrique. We proudly acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this area by recognizing we are on the traditional territory of the Ojibway, Cree, Oji-

cree and Algonquin people of Mattagami First Nation, located in Treaty 9 territory. I am from Timmins, Ontario, born and raised. I am an active member of CUPE 8888 as the local's secretary-treasurer. I am a 32-year employee with District School Board Ontario North East and I work as chief custodian at a secondary school.

I enjoy teaching and learning our traditional culture in my community and surrounding areas, through drumming, singing, pow wows, dancing and ceremonies. My goal is to create the changes needed and to bring awareness and educate about equity issues which involve race, gender, social class, and sexual orientation.

I have worked closely with Indigenous movements, including Every Child Matters; justice for murdered, missing Indigenous women and children; and justice for survivors of residential schools. I am passionate about sharing with other committee members the importance of this work and what needs to be

accomplished for success. I am committed to working toward achieving equality and enhancing diversity within our unions and our workplaces and communities. We will be the voice for those that have been silenced or felt isolated and we will create a safe place for all. I look forward to working with OSBCU's Equity Committee and with OSBCU to accomplish these goals. Meegwetch, thank you.

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Cindy Ellis, CUPE 218



I am proud to be a member of the OSBCU Equity Committee. I was born and raised in Toronto but I made Port Perry my home once I started my family. I love gardening, being at the lake and kayaking has recently become one of my passions.

I have worked for the Durham District School Board for 23 years as an education assistant, working with students in the special education programme. These children are a constant joy to work because they allow me to see the world through their eyes.

Working with OSBCU's Equity Committee has allowed me to be exposed to a wider range of different opinions and ideas. It gives me a voice for my own thoughts and how I can help make effective change regarding systemic racism beginning with our workplace.

We need to educate, develop and promote equity issues in all areas of gender, race, social and sexual orientation. Diversity, equity and inclusion need to be valued and respected, both within our workplaces and moving out into our communities.

I am working with a passionate group of people on the committee and look forward to helping to empower others to use their voice.

Benefits Trust

The **CUPE Education Workers' Benefits Trust (EWBT)** puts out an annual report members; we invite you to read our latest update [here](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact info@cupe-ewbt.ca.

A reminder of some of the players in CUPE EWBT:

- OTIP: third-party administrator
- Canada Life: claims payer for life insurance, dental and extended healthcare
- Chubb: insurer for accidental death and dismemberment.



Job Classification Working Groups – What’s been happening?

Custodial

The group has had two successful forums with great rank and file participation. The group is working to ensure custodial staff have proper ventilation at their worksites and will also work on means to improve recognition and respect for the custodial classification.

Clerical

The OSBCU clerical working group held their provincial forum October 19 and had an outstanding turn out of members. It was great to see all who attended to share best practices “tips and tricks” on some of the key items directly affecting clerical members in the province. This was an evening well spent with great positive conversation and key discussions that could benefit all who attended.

Trades

The group is seeking to identify more CUPE members from the trades to come forward to sit on the OSBCU Trades Reference Committee. An issue to work on is ensuring the provincial government and school boards keep trades services and classification in-house. We know our facilities best and can get issues/concerns resolved fast. We do not need outside contractors coming into our sites that do not have police checks or even COVID testing or COVID Vaccinated. Our students deserve the best.

Library workers

The Library Worker group worked to mark Canadian Library Month in October and celebrated School Library Workers Day on October 25 by flooding social media with pictures of school library workers. And library workers were featured in every Education Worker Wednesday profiles in October. The forum group is also going to be advocating for the work they do at board level, in staff meetings, chats with principal, trustees, etc.

Look for news from other job classifications in the next issue.

Helpful Labour Links

[Canadian Labour Congress](#)

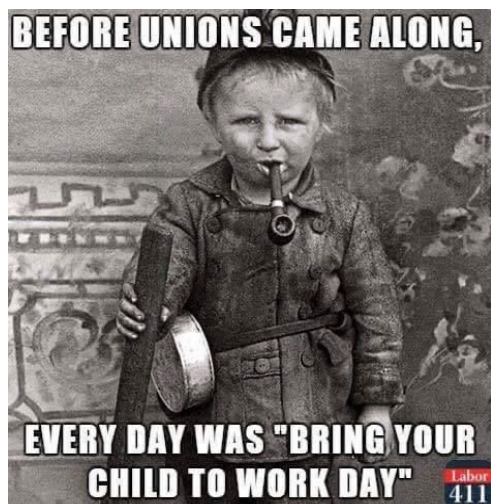
[Ministry of Labour](#)

[The Ontario Federation of Labour](#)

[Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers \(OHCOW\)](#)

[Prevention Link](#)

[WSIB](#)



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