



TOGETHER, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

OSBCC Mobilization Update 2012

Issue 5

September 7, 2012

Sisters and Brothers,

With a new school year starting, CUPE school board support workers are in Ontario schools working to support student success. Meanwhile CUPE's Ontario School Board Coordinating Committee (OSBCC) – representing over 55,000 CUPE school board support workers at the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) – have been working hard at keeping members informed.

A fourth Town Hall took place on September 5 and we are pleased to say we had over 375 members on the call. We updated callers on what is happening with locals where the Employer has filed for conciliation, progress on the original Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) complaint, legislation which threatens to strip our collective agreements and provided some immediate actions members can take.

We have asked local presidents to provide us with the telephone numbers of activists who should be included in future Town Hall meetings. Please send the information to: terri.preston@cupe4400.org.

It was great to see so many of you at the rally against the legislation at Queen's Park on Tuesday, August 28. By all accounts it was one of the largest rallies since the Harris years. Sister Tracey Newman did a great job speaking on behalf of support staff and our signs stood out making it clear support staff were affected by the legislation as well as Teachers.

Brother Fred Hahn, CUPE Ontario President, has also been very busy these last few weeks promoting the work that we do in the media and raising awareness that this legislation affects not only teachers but also school board support staff. He also made it clear that Bill 115 represents an unprecedented attack on free collective bargaining in the province of Ontario and that we will challenge it by all means necessary.

Our radio ads were released last week and aired across the province reminding the public that schools were open and ready for students. The ads highlight the work of support staff in Ontario schools and feedback has been very positive. You can listen to the radio ads at the webpage address provided on the reverse.

We want to remind locals that we are in a freeze period of our collective agreements. This means that every time your employer breaches that freeze period by changing your working conditions or the terms of your collective agreement, individual grievances should immediately be submitted with the following wording:

"The Employer has violated my Collective Agreement by changing my terms and conditions of employment. I hereby immediately demand that the terms and conditions of my Collective Agreement be fully complied with and that I be made whole for all losses suffered."

It is important that **individual** grievances are filed rather than group or policy grievances and that they be forwarded to your CUPE National Representative immediately.

An important step in stopping Bill 115 from passing is to get the support of MPPs. It is critical that local leaders let their members know about the MessageyourMPP.ca website. It takes less than two minutes for members to tell their MPP how they feel. Please use your email distribution lists to generate the numbers needed to get the MPPs to back down.

We also ask that you encourage your members to call their MPP directly and ask him/her how they intend to vote on this Bill. Make it clear that if the MPP votes in favour, they will not have your support for the next election. We believe the Liberals are split on this issue and we need to put pressure on MPPs to turn this around. You can find your MPPs contact information on our webpage by entering your postal code.

Items are also available for locals to purchase in order to show solidarity in the workplace. If your local is interested in buying items please visit the webpage listed below and click on the "order materials" link.

We are holding a leadership meeting on Sunday, September 23 at the Doubletree Hotel near the Toronto Airport. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. At this meeting, we will discuss the implications of the legislation (if passed) and what this means for local bargaining. We will also discuss a common strategy for the upcoming months. A flyer will be sent out to locals with further information about the meeting shortly.

We now have a webpage set up for CUPE school board support workers where you can find all the information you need. Please visit cupe.on.ca/supportededucation to get up to speed and take action!

A quick recap:

- Report and grieve any changes in working conditions. Ensure staff are informed of the grievances so Labour Board Complaints can be filed.
- Contact your MPP using the CUPE Ontario website and by phone. Ask how they will vote on Bill 115 and let them know how they vote will affect how you vote next election.
- Visit cupe.on.ca/supportededucation and share the page with others. Keep the pressure up!

This is a challenging time for all of us and our members. The sand is constantly shifting and information changing. Communication with our members has never been more important. It is critical they know what the Union is doing and more importantly what they can do to turn this around.

This is the time to stand up...rolling over is not an option! We thank you for your support as we continue to move forward together.

In solidarity,

Your Ontario School Board Coordinating Committee