

CHRONICLE

CUPE LOCAL 728

Volume 52 – Issue 1
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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING January 15th, 2025 ONLINE ONLY

The Jan 15th General Membership meeting is at 8:00 p.m. You can attend Online only - Zoom.

You must pre-register for this meeting using your FIRST AND LAST NAME as all voting is done through Zoom. You WILL NOT be let into the meeting unless you register using your first and last name.

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/c731n63YRU2kbVSAQo5jaQ>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

SHOP STEWARDS

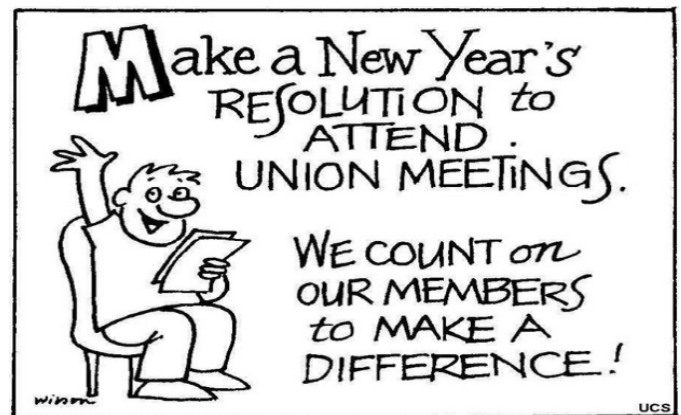
If you have an issue or a question pertaining to work, please call your Shop Steward, leave a message on the phone number listed below. They will contact you when they are available. The Union office will only refer you to your Shop Steward.

IESW Elementary – Cassie Deezar.....778-808-4483
IESW Sec/Spareboard
Amanda Williams.....604-818-2019
Clerical - Shannon Levinsky.....778-808-3917
Caretaker – Edward Parsotam.....604-812-2611
MT - Non-Trades – Liam Hawthorne.....604-813-1799
MT - Trades – Blair Hofer.....604-723-1921
School & Community Support
Allan Henricks.....604-341-6627
Student Support – Nora Hooper.....778-808-5823

AGENDA

All Motions must be submitted in writing

1. Elect ten (10) Delegates to attend the CUPE BC 2025 Convention, Westin Bayshore Vancouver from 7:00 p.m. April 30th – 4:00 p.m. May 3, 2025.



Stewards will only respond to emails directed to their Union email (@cupe728.ca) and phone calls to their union phone during non-working hours.

Emails sent to the employer email WILL NOT BE ANSWERED, as no union business is ever done through your district email.

PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!!!

As the school year starts again, I hope everyone had some time to unwind, relax, and recharge. I was lucky enough to take some time off during Christmas and New Years and I am back to the grind. I am away at Winter School for a week taking Transforming Conflict into Union Solidarity. I am really looking forward to it, though I will have to leave early to go to provincial bargaining training. With the new cabinet organized I feel bargaining may start soon. Which is exciting as a local we are really getting prepared.

It will be interesting to watch how our federal elections roll out with the stepping down of Trudeau. This is going to be a big year and I'm hopeful about how it will turn out.

In solidarity, Tammy Murphy

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

With 2025 in front of us and its future, it lets me reflect on this past year. 2024 was both successful and frustrating with lessons to take forward and learn from.

Member violence while at work continues to worry your Union, the District's response to those incidents has been discouraging as the level of incidences remain unchanged.

The new year will bring new opportunities, those include working together with other organizations within the District with similar goals regarding violence.

Additionally, health and safety member education will continue to be provided and increased in the upcoming year through live Q&A sessions, on-line materials and email support.

Thanks for all your support, appreciated.

In solidarity, George Hardy



SECRETARY TREASURER

Secretary Treasurer Financial Information:

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy new year! It's a new beginning in many ways just as it is for our financials and fiscal year. As some of you have heard me say at our GM's, we tried a new way of tracking our floor motions and events that wasn't a great fit. I have revised how they display

so, an explanation will not be necessary every month anymore as well as going forward.

2024 has closed and we have rolled into 2025, the way we manage our mileage has been reviewed and revised to insure the no loss/no gain perspective and all the new budgets voted at the GM November 20, 2024, for 2025 are uploaded and ready to go.

Secretary Treasurer JEIS and Benefit information:

When absent from work 6+ days you may be asked to complete an employer district medical certificate, a union sick bank application and possibly an attending physicians' statement plus an authorization for Desjardins (our insurance provider, if the illness may be ongoing). We understand how painstaking this is, we are working diligently to find resolutions.

SD36 summary of benefits:

<https://www.pebt.ca/school-district/school-district-36/>

SD36 benefits frequently asked questions:

<https://www.pebt.ca/frequently-asked-questions/benefits-faqs/>

CUPE728 Bylaws including sick bank and benefit fund:

<https://cupe728.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/168/2024/07/2024-L728-Bylaws-April-26-2024-Official.pdf>

In Solidarity, Cory Hyslop

MAINTENANCE TRADES

Welp, here he is, the post holiday Grinch...

I will get the niceties out of the way first, however. HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!! Hopefully the holiday season was kind to all, and many celebrations were had with the people we love.

Now the not so pleasant. It has been a busy month of learning at 728, specifically bargaining prep, which includes job action stuff. I don't want to set the alarm bells off but the whole province is at the bargaining stages. Not just other Unions and other locals, but specifically the BC teachers, as any job action done by them has an effect on us. Now myself having spent waaaaay too much over the holiday season, this knowledge was a bit jarring because like many I was really only focused on our next contract. The teachers are up first, I would advise everyone to do their absolute best to cut frivolous expenses during every bargaining year as our ability to work isn't always in our own hands. We will hopefully have a bit of advanced knowledge of any job action done by the teachers, but we don't vote on theirs and them ours.

Again, no alarm bells as there are no reasons to believe any job action will occur, however, it wouldn't be a bad idea to save up (if you haven't) a buffer, should one happen. There is some information on preparing yourself for a strike and I will share what I can, both in an upcoming unit meeting (yes, I said it) and on a personal ask basis. Did I mention HAPPY NEW YEAR? As always be safe.....and frugal?

In solidarity, Blair Hofer

CARETAKERS

Namaste, Happy new year All!

Workplace culture is shaped by diverse individuals who bring unique experiences, skills, and perspectives to the table. In our workforce, many employees communicate in a language that may not be their first. Recognizing and appreciating this diversity is key for collaboration and respect.

For individuals whose second language is English, expressing ideas, emotions, or opinions may not always align with the literal meaning of the words they use. It's important for colleagues and leaders to consider the overall context of a conversation rather than focusing solely on precise wording. Misinterpretations often arise when we fail to understand the intent or cultural nuance behind a statement.

For example, a straightforward "yes" in response to a complex question may not always signify full agreement or understanding. In some cultures, saying "yes" might simply mean "I acknowledge you" or "I heard you." Conversely, direct answers in certain situations might seem overly blunt or impolite, depending on cultural norms.

To build stronger communication, it is crucial to approach conversations with patience and an open mind. Active listening—seeking clarification when needed and observing nonverbal cues—can help bridge gaps in understanding. Avoid making assumptions about what someone "meant" based on their words alone. Instead, consider the bigger picture: the situation, their tone, and the broader discussion.

Workplace culture thrives on inclusivity, and embracing language diversity is part of that. Encouraging clear, respectful dialogue not only strengthens relationships but also demonstrates a commitment to equity. By focusing on meaning rather than literal interpretation, teams can work together more effectively and create a workplace environment where everyone feels valued and understood.

Please make note of our next caretaker unit meeting Saturday, January 18, 2025. This is a follow up bargaining session for ALL Caretakers. It is a hybrid meeting in-person at the union office (207-6678 152 St., Surrey) or online zoom. pre-register for meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/z-VsIL6WQOueggT6iZY5gw>

In solidarity, Edward Parsotam



CLERICAL

Hello everyone!!

Happy New Year!! Well, that break just flew by!!! Wishing you all great things in 2025!! I am looking forward to starting the year out with the CLC Winter School, Women in Leadership Course!! Thank you to all that voted for me to attend! I appreciate you!

I will be doing a Clerical Unit Meeting January 22, 2025, on Zoom at 4:30 PM. If there is something you would like on the agenda, please email me at ssclerical@cupe728.ca. Please pre-register through this zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fFwShjLwSm684s8cnkWTQ>

We did a lot of bargaining prep in December, and we will be continuing this month and into the spring/summer. Thank you to everyone that sent in their thoughts and ideas already!

Finally, I want to start the year out by thanking you all for your hard work and dedication. It's always tough to get through that first part of the year! You all did it and you are appreciated!

Remember to be kind to yourselves and each other. ❤️

In solidarity, Shannon Levinsky

MAINTENANCE NON-TRADES

Happy New Year Everyone. Hope everyone had time to relax, celebrate and enjoy Christmas and the winter break. I know many of you worked over the break and we recognize your hard work.

This is a bargaining year. Our contract expires on June 30, 2025. The executive will be sending out a survey in the spring that will help us detail your priorities for what we bargain for. The survey takes some time but needs to be done. Please make sure you watch for it. This will **ONLY** get sent to your personal email. We **DO NOT** use district email accounts for union business. If our contract expires before we negotiate a new one, then our current agreement is kept in place until we are done.

Horticulturalists, apprentices, unfilled positions and quasi-discipline are on our lists of things to look into and complete this year. Contracting out is still an issue and we appreciate your input when you see this happening.

As always, the best way to reach me is through email or a short text message. I check messages on my breaks and usually contact you after work to discuss any issues.

Have a great new year. Let's hope it is a great bargaining year.

In solidarity, Liam Hawthorne

STUDENT SUPPORT

Happy New Year and welcome back to work everyone!

I hope you all had an enjoyable holiday break. It has been fairly quiet over the break with only a few calls and emails. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of filling out incident reports when any incident occurs, or you were at risk for injury. Remember that these are to be filled out on work time, and no one should discourage you from filing one.

If you are asked for a doctors note after a short absence, please contact me. The union is grieving this new policy, and we need to know how widespread this is.

We are heading into bargaining soon and I look forward to representing all CUPE 728 members at the table.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Health & Safety Sub-Committee

Happy New Year Everyone! On behalf of all of our committee members I would like to wish you all a safe and happy 2025!

Our committee will be hosting another zoom health and safety information session in the next month or so, so stay tuned for the date. If you have topics you would like to see discussed, please email them to healthsafety@cupe728.ca subject line info session. We are all looking forward to another successful session.

Remember if you are on a site health and safety committee there is training available to you, and you should be taking part in incident investigations.

Stay safe everyone!

Nora Hooper, Chair, OH and S Sub-Committee

Human Rights and Equity

As-Salamu Alaikum CUPE 728 members,

Our committee has worked on and recorded some conversations that we thought would be extremely helpful to us all to understand share knowledge. Please when you find sometime to listen, check them out on the Human Rights and Equity committee page and select from the recordings that will be posted.

In solidarity, Edward Parsotam

IESW UNIT MEETING

We will be having an IESW unit meeting February 6, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. Please pre-register through this zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tLerf_u7S66nmo8ekQ7mAA

BARGAINING PROPOSALS

If you have any bargaining suggestions, please email them to the office office@cupe728.ca.



THANK YOU NOTES

Below is a list of members who have sent in a thank you card/email this month after receiving flowers/gift basket or gift from CUPE 728.

Darcy C. – retirement Diana R. - sympathy

If one of your co-workers is away from work because they have lost a loved one, please contact the union office.

We are only notified if a member is away sick from work.



HOW TO FILE AN INCIDENT REPORT

1. REPORT TO SUPERVISOR/FIRST AID
2. GO TO <https://staff.surreyschools.ca/> AND SIGN IN
3. GO TO MY EFORMS THEN HEALTH AND SAFETY FOLLOWED BY WORKERS REPORT.
4. FILL OUT FORM TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.
 - a. Please go into as much detail as possible
 - b. Do not use student full names just use Initials
5. Submit the form
6. When you get your copy of the form which will be emailed to you right away, please forward a copy of it to the union at president@cupe728.ca This is important to do so that the union can be involved
7. IF YOU ARE INJURED AND NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION PLEASE CALL WORKSAFE BC at 1888-967-5377 as well because this will open up a claim for you.
8. The employer should be providing the space, equipment, and most important paid time to complete these reports.

Things to report: Injury to yourself, violent incident by others, bullying and harassment, near misses (accidents that almost happened)

1st VICE PRESIDENT

What is Gossip?

Casual or unconstrained conversations or reports about other people, typically involve details that are not confirmed as truth. You are going out of your way to tell lies or share untruthful information about others.

Here are some examples of gossip:

- Chit-chat that celebrates the misfortune of others
- Conversations that have a negative emotional charge or seem to support conflict
- Talk, that hurts or damages the one being spoken of – would you say it in front of that person?
- Rumours about another employee's work situation or home life.

Why is gossip a problem in the workplace?

Employees might discuss a colleague's behavior at work or the manager's latest decision. Such gossip in the workplace whether positive or negative, can affect your overall work environment. Learning how to manage gossip positively among your colleagues can help keep the workplace healthy and productive.

What are the consequences of workplace gossip?

Both workplace gossip and any actions contributing to a hostile work environment can have negative consequences. However, those consequences differ in type, range, and severity. Unwanted gossip in the workplace can leave people feeling unsupported and lower a person's sense of trust or comfort while they are at work.

Can workplace gossip cause slander?

In extreme cases, gossip can turn to slander, harassment, and consequences. You could be disciplined for spreading gossip. The employer can consider what you are doing as intentional and malicious. This can lead to discipline which could include suspension or termination.

What is Malicious Gossip?

When someone is spreading information about someone that is intended to harm people or their reputation or they want to cause them embarrassment and upset. This would also be considered a form of bullying and harassment, which can lead to discipline.

How to Handle Workplace Gossip

1. **Ignore it** – sometimes the best thing to do is ignore it since reacting to the gossip can sometimes help it spread. If you ignore it, people may eventually grow bored with the topic and stop.
2. **Study it** – before you do anything make sure what you are hearing is gossip. Sometimes work discussions are different than gossip and not all discussions require action. The difference is whether someone's character is being attacked or if the person speaking directly about an event related to work.

3. *Review Company Policies*

Our workplace has policies in place we are to follow:

- 7100 Personal Practices and Policies
- 7110 and 7110.1 Whistle Blower
- 7200 and 7200.1 Employment Conditions
- 7210 and 7210.1 Discrimination, Bullying, and Harassment Policy
- School Act

These can be found on the Surrey School District website. As a school district employee, you are required to always follow them.

4. **Watch your conversation**

- Joining gossip encourages more gossip and can also get you in trouble. Either ignore it or say: "We should not be talking about someone else".

5. **Keep your private life at home**

- We spend a lot of time with our co-workers and yes some of them become our friends. However, the more we share about our personal lives, the more likely the gossip can start. Gossip can start innocently, and keeping your personal life away from work can protect you from getting hurt or from others getting hurt.

6. **Address it directly**

- If ignoring it doesn't work and the gossip will not go away, ask to speak to the person privately. Explain that what they are doing is making you uncomfortable. Be respectful and professional, the person may not be aware that what they are doing is gossiping.

7. **Talk to a supervisor**

- Finally, let your manager or admin know what is going on. Maybe they can send out a mass email to all staff reminding them of work policies. If it is more serious, then leave it in their hands to deal with and sort out. Ensure your going to the Manager or Admin is kept confidential. You are protected under the Whistle-Blower Policy.

Let us do our part to make our workplace a great place. We do not know what others are going through, nor should we. If you are frustrated with someone at work and need to vent, please find someone outside the work environment. Offload to someone who has no connection to your work environment. This way you can come back to your work and deal with the person professionally and you haven't muddied the situation by talking to other staff.

Gossip needs to stay out of the workplace.

In solidarity, Theresa Pidcock



My objective is to turn your conflict into productive conversation.