

CHRONICLE

CUPE LOCAL 728

Volume 52 – Issue 8
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Oct 2025
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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING **October 15th, 2025 - HYBRID**

The Oct 15th General Membership meeting is at 6:00 p.m. You can attend ***in-person*** at the union office #207-6678 152 St., Surrey (Turn down 66 A Ave) or ***online Zoom***.

You must pre-register for this meeting using your FIRST AND LAST NAME even if you plan to attend in person 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/3wbHIAIKTPGnngP204oPgw>

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

AGENDA

1. Elect one (1) member to the Health & Safety Sub-Committee
2. Elect one (1) Sergeant-at-Arms
3. Elect Two (2) Sick Bank & Benefit Fund Committee members for the term's Oct/25 – Oct/28
4. Elect four (4) members to attend CLC Winter School in Harrison Hot Springs for 1-week during the period Jan 11 to Feb 13, 2026.
[2026-WSBrochure.pdf](#)
5. ***Notice of Motion:*** To make the 1st VP position a seconded position using the same language and pay as the Secretary-Treasurer.
6. ***Notice of Motion:*** To donate \$10,000 to the Surrey Fire Fighters' Pipe and Drums Band

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
Sheila Simpson.....604-818-2019
Clerical - Shannon Levinsky.....778-808-3917
Caretaker – Edward Parsotam.....604-812-2611
MT - Non-Trades – Cale Hufsmith.....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



PRESIDENT

Well, a month in, and we didn't have much time to establish our footing this year before starting to move at full speed. Working short-handed, not being replaced, 1701s, and audits, to name just a few factors affecting our members. We appreciate all that you are doing to keep our schools safe and open; you are the backbone of the school.

Thank you for coming to the proposal ratification meeting and voting to support the proposals to hit our local table. Meanwhile I am still bargaining at the provincial table. As you are aware, we were offered a terrible monetary package before the summer, and we have recently countered with our monetary package. We have several dates planned for the coming weeks, and we will also continue on the weekends to best utilize our available time for negotiation.

Our contracting out Movie Night/Welcome Back BBQ was a great success! Thank you to all who attended, thank you to our executive, CUPE 402, and entertainment committee for helping get all organized on the day. Special thanks to Theresa Pidcock for organizing, planning, and adapting to reorganize and plan. This day could not have been a success without you all.

I am excited to attend CUPE National Convention in Toronto and look forward to sharing what is happening here and to learn and bringing back information from other CUPE K-12s from across the country.

Hopefully, everyone took the opportunity to join an event for Truth and Reconciliation Day, as this is not only a day to support our Indigenous siblings but also a day to learn what the meaning of this day is.

I also hope all have the ability to share some time with friends or loved ones on Thanksgiving weekend.

Thank you all again for all you do.

In solidarity, Tammy Murphy

1st VICE PRESIDENT

September was a busy and productive month. We had grievance meetings, member outreach, training for executives, bargaining preparation, and had discussions with the employer, where we are addressing workplace safety concerns for you, our members.

We received numerous calls and emails regarding the challenges the IESWs are facing with student coverage in their schools and in special programs. These concerns were brought forward during our September meeting with the superintendent. We also raised multiple concerns about outdated Safety Plans and that the employer needs to ensure our members are working in safe and protected environments.

A reminder to you all to please put in your incident reports, ensure your safety plans are updated, and you are getting the opportunity to debrief after every incident with your school-based team.

We held two grievance meetings with the employer and are currently up to date on both Step 2 and Step 3 grievances. We currently have 22 outstanding grievances.

In other updates, I met with the Manager of Labour Relations at the DFC to explore professional development ideas for DFC staff. We also had JJEC training, which I really enjoyed.

We had The Welcome Back BBQ and Movie Night with CUPE 402 on Sept 20th at Bear Creek Park. It was a great success! Thanks to everyone who attended and helped. Special thanks to CUPE 402 staff and president Monika Dean, CUPE BC, our CUPE National representatives Carissa Taylor and Tuesday Andrich, CUPE 728 executives and the entertainment committee for helping it be a great event.

Finally, Tammy and I were proud to help set up for the RED DRESS event at Bear Creek Park on Sunday, September 21st, for the HEU.

In solidarity, Theresa Pidcock

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

I hope everyone had a smooth start to the school year. I know this time of the year can have its challenges. I would like to let everyone know that we are here for you when you need someone to stand beside you when issues come up at work. Please reach out to your stewards as soon as you think there is a problem.

I would like to set up some unit meetings within this department soon. I would like some input from you the members on what the issues are within the departments. I also want to know what days and times work for people.

Please reach out to me through email at ssattendants@cupe728.ca. This is a great way to connect with everyone.

In solidarity, Allan Henricks

IESW

Happy Fall 🍁🍂

We'd like to start out by thanking the membership for attending our bargaining ratification meeting. Your bargaining team truly appreciates the support. We hope everyone enjoyed the welcome back BBQ and movie night with CUPE local 402. The weather held off and it looked like a lot of fun was had.

We hope everyone was successful falling back into routine. September is a stressful month; however, we made it. We'd like to remind our IESW's that during the day, we are working at our own sites, and we are unable to answer the union phone during working hours. If it's an emergency, you need to contact the union office. We do our best to get back to members calls and emails within 24 - 48 hours. Calling numerous times or texting back-to-

back messages will not have us answer any faster. Please remember all emails sent need to be from a personal email, HR can access the work email system, so we do not respond via district email.

Unit meeting October 30, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. Zoom ***please pre-register for this meeting:***
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/jo6Fb3ycQCKMhyKDbbDCA>

In solidarity, Cassie Deezar and Sheila Simpson

CARETAKERS

Hello mga kaibigan,

I just want to remind us all how important it is to look after ourselves and each other while we're on the job. We do a lot to keep Surrey schools running smoothly, but none of it is worth risking our health or peace of mind. If you see something unsafe (big or small), please report it. A small spill, a piece of broken equipment, or even a situation that just doesn't feel right... bringing it forward helps protect everyone. Do not intervene with dangerous situations! If you ever face abuse or harassment, remember: your safety comes first. Step back, keep yourself safe, and then report what happened.

Our mental health matters too. The work can get stressful, and it's okay to admit when we're feeling the weight of it. Talk to a coworker, lean on union support, or reach out to resources that are there to help. None of us should carry it alone. We're strongest when we watch out for each other. Stay safe, support one another, and never hesitate to speak up. And always remember, your union has your back.

I will be highlighting caretakers and adding reports to the website on the caretaker webpage and we will have our first Lunch and Learn highlighting "Motions", Oct 14th, 2025, on zoom, ***Please pre-register in advance through zoom link below:***
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/4P13TF9QQ-udkCQOE9u96g>
and a unit meeting on October 25th, 2025, 10:00 a.m. at Union office.

Paalam Muna! In solidarity, Edward Parsotam

MAINTENANCE TRADES

Well, that was another busy September. Thanks for all those who came out to the welcome back BBQ and movie night, I know it took place the same day as the golf tournament so absences will be excused. We were able to get more people educated on our anti-contracting out stance and fed alongside our friends at CUPE402 so thanks also to all those who helped.

Bargaining is still at the Provincial level, but we do have some dates to meet with employer in the coming months so don't be too discouraged. The dirty pay committee actually met and after a year plus between meetings nothing has been figured out. More work to do there for sure. Still fighting the contracting out of PM work, which is increasingly frustrating, but we cannot give any ground on losing our work.

Please remember that the transit vans do not have auto lights and as it's getting darker out there not having your head or taillights on isn't safe for all parties. Be safe.

In solidarity, Blair Hofer

CLERICAL

Hello all,

By now, you've made it through 1701's, and you can all finally breathe. The demands put on clerical, this year were nothing short of unbelievable. Last minute, new processes, audit checklists and demands, Feeding Futures added work, failures to fill and we still did it. So please take a moment to congratulate yourselves and each other.

I want to thank the membership for voting for me to go to CUPE National this year. I will have some exciting news to share with you next month after we return.

As you all know we are currently in the bargaining process and have some potential dates coming up. Stay tuned for bargaining updates.

Remember to take care of yourselves and each other.

In solidarity, Shannon Levinsky



November 8th is National Aboriginal Veterans Day, a day of remembrance and commemoration of the contributions of Indigenous Veterans in the First and Second World Wars, as well as the Korean War.

This Aboriginal Veterans Day, we would like to express our gratitude for the contributions Indigenous Veterans have made to Canada and the world.

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Financial Information:

September's dues report for August had 2114 dues paying members which included 7 new initiations. 1391 members worked 37.5 hours.

The 2026 Budget preparations have begun; the plan is to present to members at the November 19th general membership meeting.

Employer information when absent due to illness or injury 6+ days:

We must cooperate with Desjardins and Health Services. SD36 automatically sends a district medical certificate (DMC) and Desjardins has their own Attending Physician Statement. If you are going to be off an extended period of time, Desjardins forms are a necessity. Only complete the SD36 DMC form if asked in a live conversation there are times when it may not be necessary even though they send it to everyone. Your health services representative should be able to help you if you explain the situation. Any questions, please call the union office.

SD36 summary of benefits: <https://www.pebt.ca/school-district/school-district-36/>

Absent due to illness or injury 6+ days Stats:

Month	New JEIS Referrals	Return To Work	JEIS Suspensions	Transition To LTD
Jan	130	65	8	16
Feb	108	80	15	20
Mar	59	68	21	16
Apr	96	54	10	16
May	79	51	9	21
Jun	98	76	2	8
Jul	21	43	9	3
Aug	10	19	7	6

In solidarity, Cory Hyslop

SAVE THE DATES

December 6, 2025 – Children's Holiday Party

December 13, 2025 – Cultural Holiday Party

*More details for both events
will be released soon*



Congratulations to the Winners of The Thomas G. Ellis Memorial & CUPE Local 728 Scholarships

\$2,000 Thomas G. Ellis Memorial
• **Adaeze Egwuatuonwu**

CUPE 728 Scholarships:

\$1,000 – **Arshiya Sharma**

\$500 – **Connor H.E. Clifford**

\$500 – **Dylan T L Zuo**



“Check out the Human rights and Equity webpage for articles on Thanksgiving in Canada, Islamic Heritage month.”



Thanksgiving in Canada A Holiday with History and Meaning

Thanksgiving in Canada is more than a turkey dinner, it's a holiday with deep roots in history and labour rights. The first recorded Canadian Thanksgiving goes back to 1578, when English explorer Martin Frobisher gave thanks in Newfoundland for a safe journey. Later, French settlers and Indigenous communities also marked the harvest season with ceremonies of gratitude.

In 1957, when the Canadian Parliament declared Thanksgiving as “A Day of General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed,” to be celebrated on the second Monday of October. From that moment, Thanksgiving became a federal holiday for most Canadians.

The twist, not all provinces treat it as a statutory holiday. In most provinces it's recognized as a stat, meaning workers are entitled to a paid day off (or statutory pay if required to work). In provinces like Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and PEI, it's recognized but not guaranteed as a stat holiday, leaving some workers without the same benefit.

Thanksgiving is both a chance to rest and a reminder us of our rights as workers. It's a time to appreciate family, community, and the hard work we do all year long. It is about more than turkey and pumpkin pie. It's a day to reflect on gratitude, community, and the blessings of the harvest. Indigenous traditions of giving thanks for the land and its bounty continue to influence the meaning of the holiday. And in Canada's diverse society, families often celebrate with a mix of cultural foods and customs, making each Thanksgiving unique.

At its heart, Thanksgiving is about pausing to give thanks—both for the past that shaped us and the present we share together.

In solidarity, Human Rights and Equity committee

October Highlight

Islamic Heritage Month

There are many cultural heritage celebrations through the month of October, this year we would like to highlight Islamic heritage month.

Islamic Heritage Month, a time to celebrate and reflect on the rich history, culture, and contributions of Muslim communities both in Canada and around the world. This observance provides us with an opportunity to learn, share, and strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within our schools and communities.

Islamic civilizations have made lasting contributions to knowledge, science, medicine, mathematics, literature, art, and architecture for over fourteen centuries. These achievements, along with the values of compassion, community service, and social justice, continue to inspire and shape societies today.

Here in British Columbia, many schools take part in Islamic Heritage Month through classroom activities, cultural events, and opportunities for dialogue. These initiatives not only highlight the vibrant contributions of Muslim Canadians but also help to build understanding, respect, and unity among students and staff.

As a union representing education workers, we recognize and celebrate the important role Muslim staff, students, and families play in enriching our school communities. We encourage members to take this opportunity to engage in learning, support inclusive practices, and stand against discrimination in all its forms.

Together, let us honor the past, celebrate the present, and commit to building a more inclusive and respectful future for everyone.

In Solidarity, Rabia Waraich, Rasbir Sangha