

CHRONICLE

CUPE LOCAL 728

Volume 53 – Issue 3
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March 2026
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AGENDA

1. **Notice of Motion:** To change the CUPE 728 bylaw
 - *Benefit Fund - Section 24*
 - Email will be sent out with proposed changes and they will be posted on the CUPE 728 website www.cupe728.ca
2. Appoint a returning Officer for the 2026 Elections
3. **Nominate** CUPE 728 Officers
 - President (2-year term/even year)
 - 2nd Vice President (2-year term/even year)
 - Recording Secretary (2-year term/even year)
 - 2 Executive-at-Large (1-year term)
 - Communications Officer (1-year term)

Executive Shop Stewards Positions

- Caretaker (2-year term/even year)
- Maintenance Non-Trades (2-year term/even year)
- Student Support Two (2-year term/even year)
- School & Community Support (2-year term/even)
- 2 Sergeant-at-Arms (1-year term)

One (1) Trustee

- 3-year term 2026 – 2029

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

March 11th, 2026 - HYBRID

The March 11th General Membership meeting is at 8:00 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/zoom/register/Ooi6W0DHSCShngNBYiasUg>

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.

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 One (City Centre/Panorama/Sullivan)
Sheila Simpson – 604-818-2019

Student Support Two (Cloverdale/Clayton/Guildford)
Cassie Deezar – 778-808-4483

Student Support Three
(South Surrey/White Rock/Newton/Fleetwood)
Nora Hooper – 778-808-5823



NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

March 11, 2026 – Nominations for Executive Board Positions

April 22, 2026 – Nominee 3-minute statements (only if nominated at the March 11th meeting)

April 25, 2026 – Elections

All zoom links on last page of this Chronicle. Please go and pre-register for all 3 meetings.

PRESIDENT

The month was crazy busy and ended the week in Ottawa for the CUPE National Literacy and Essential Skills Committee. What an amazing experience to be selected for such an important committee. I got to meet the new and returning members and set forward a plan for the coming 2 years. Lots of work to be done but I am up for the challenge and am looking forward to advancing the work. While there we also met and were put with groups and had the opportunity to lobby the government on some key issues. We spoke about our lapsing medical system, lack of childcare and a huge mental health crisis.

Though I wasn't home till the early hours of Friday we had our first Strike Prep education. We did this in collaboration with other K-12 locals in the lower mainland. Thank you to Delta local 1091, New Westminster local 409, Burnaby Local 379, and Langley's inside and outside workers local 1260 and 1181 for sharing in this education with us. We did have less 728 people at this event as we were adjoining locals but with around 50 folks it was a great experience. Thank you to all the CUPE folks that were able to come and participate.

We are still at the Provincial bargaining table and are meeting during spring break. We did take a bit of a break but as the province came back with a revised package, we are back at the table to hopefully acquire some great gains for you, our members. Once this is completed, we will hit the local table to make some gains for the members and better language in our Collective Agreement.

Though February was very busy we have lots of things moving forward. Election nominations dates have been moved up 1 week due to spring break, and our April GM has been moved back 1 week to allow folks to enjoy the Surrey Vaisakhi celebration that is taking place on Saturday April 18th. Therefore, our dates for nominations will be on Wednesday, March 11th at 8:00 p.m. Brief statements will be held on Wednesday, April 22nd at 6:00 p.m. Elections will be on Saturday, April 25th at 10:00 a.m. Please come out and support those running for positions in our local.

In solidarity, Tammy Murphy



**Have a relaxing
Spring break**

**CUPE office is open
During the break**

1st VICE PRESIDENT

February was a busy month, I focused on grievance work, bargaining preparation, executive leadership, and committee participation. We are currently at 19 grievances.

This month I was involved in grievance meetings and mediation preparation, including Step 2 grievances and District-based mediation sessions. We also spent time prepping for bargaining, working alongside 5 other CUPE Local and National representatives in advance of upcoming negotiations. We had a great day with New Westminster, Delta, Burnaby, and Langley Support Staff in education on strike preparation. It is important we prepare and engage with our members, to ensure we are ready for anything.

We had our regular Table Officers and Executive meetings, as well as the liaison meetings with the district on policy and budget matters. This was very different from previous years, and I wish we had more time to voice our concerns and ideas for the future of our members. We also took part in the District's Strategic Plan Consultation at REC, and we were able to see how dedicated staff are to their work and where there needs to be improvement.

I was also involved in committee and sector work, which included CUPE BC Women's Committee, and Pro-D Committee, we have some great workshops coming up for May 1st.

I attended the 2026 PEBT Conference at the Radisson Hotel in Richmond. I thank the local for allowing me to go and learn the importance of PEBT and the role unions play in ensuring our members get what they need.

In solidarity, Theresa Pidcock

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

I can't believe it is already March. The time has really gone by fast. I want to tell everyone about the accessibility audit which is in the schools within our district. This audit is the starting point of making our schools more accessible than they are already and where we can improve. I want to encourage everyone to get involved with the audit by talking to your admin and sharing your input. During this audit we are looking at everything from parking, entry into the building, improvement of lights and labeling of rooms for people with visual disabilities. This is a very important task to make sure our school community is open to all.

Please come out to the general membership meetings to learn more about what is going on within our union. This is a great way to become involved and have your voices heard.

In solidarity, Allan Henricks

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Financial Report:

The Trustees have had to postpone the 2025 audit of our financial records; the date is still pending.

The Benefit fund is currently being reviewed by the sick-bank and benefit fund committee with recommendations to the constitution and bylaw committee, and finally to the executive board for its final suggestions to present to members. Stay tuned.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend CLC Winter school in Harrison, I attended the workplace psychological health and safety training the second week of February. It is an all in experience; shared meals, extensive learning, group projects and mandatory evening events, its go go go and a fantastic opportunity to connect with so many other unions. My class consisted of Revenue Canada staff, construction business agent, Move Up, WCB, EA's from other school districts and so many more. There were 23 of us in my just my classroom daily and it was such a fantastic opportunity. One key point learned that I would like to share, as this is psychological health and safety, is that intent does not matter. If you say something not appropriate, even if your intention was not to do damage, that is a violation, so it depends how it is/was received. Even if you do not say it to someone directly, but it is overheard, that too is a violation. My best advice: always be conscious of what you say and do!

Dues Report:

On the 10th of each month, we received the dues deposit from the employer for the previous month.

January 31, 2025, SD36 dues report shows:

- 5442 unique employee numbers
- 27 newly initiated members
- 4773 total members that paid dues
- 1391 work 37.5 hour work week.

JEIS - PEBT - Absent due to illness or injury 6+ days

As at our January JEIS meeting:

- 132 LTD active; less than 2 years on ltd
- 134 T & P ; total & permanent disability
- 26 LTD Pending; expected to exceed 120 days
- 171 JEIS; within the 120 days

PEBT Stats:

Month of January:

- 110 members referred to the JEIS benefits program
- 55 members returned to work after a 6+ days or longer absence
- 4 members JEIS suspended
- 24 members transitioned too LTD

Our benefits are available and explained in depth here: <https://www.pebt.ca/school-district/school-district-36/> and in our collective agreement (employee and employer) at [cupe728.ca / resources](http://cupe728.ca/).

In solidarity, Cory Hyslop

STUDENT SUPPORT TWO

Happy March 🌸

Thank you to everyone who came out to the unit meeting on March 5th, we discussed our new zones, introduced ourselves, right to refuse unsafe work, leave of absences and more. Just a reminder that all leave of absences needs to be requested via HR. Your shop stewards will do their best to support you, however not requesting a leave and calling in sick can lead to disciplinary action.

We are two weeks out from spring break to all the 10-month employees enjoy your break! To all our 12-month employees; thank you for your hard work.

Nominations are coming up March 11th for our elective positions, we vote on Saturday, April 25, 2026. Please make sure you attend so your voices are heard.

In solidarity, Cassie Deezar

STUDENT SUPPORT ONE

A big thank-you to everyone who attended our Unit meeting March 5th. It was a great turnout, and we hope you found the meeting was useful and informative. These meetings are an important opportunity for us to connect, provide updates and hear your feedback. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have questions or concerns. We are here to support you. While we do our best to respond as quickly as possible, please keep in mind it may take a day or two for us to get back to you. You can contact us by email, phone call or text and all these contacts can be found on the CUPE728 website.

As Spring Break approaches, I hope each of you takes the opportunity to rest, relax and recharge. This time away is well deserved and I hope it allows you to return to Term 3 feeling refreshed, energized and ready to finish off the school year strong. I know this has been a challenging year with the cutbacks and increased workloads adding extra pressure. Your resilience, dedication and commitment to supporting our most vulnerable learners have not gone unnoticed. You all continue to do an incredible job under difficult circumstances. Keep up the amazing work you do every day and enjoy your well-earned break!

In solidarity, Sheila Simpson



STUDENT SUPPORT THREE

Hi Everyone,

It has been a very busy month with calls, emails and meetings. Please leave a message when you call if I'm not able to answer immediately. You can also send a text or email, if I'm at work it's easier to respond to these on my breaks.

Many calls about incidents and reporting. Please make sure you are filling incident reports for all injuries and near hits, and that you do this on work time.

Only 2 weeks until spring break and I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a restful and happy break.

Please attend our upcoming March 11 GM. It is an important meeting with nominations for the CUPE executive and information on proposed bylaw changes.

In solidarity, Nora Hooper

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

If you're not sure where you can reach out when times are tough, we have lots of resources on our website that include EAP and other local organizations. There is a lot going on in the world and you are not required to hold it all on your shoulders. Please take care of yourself. There is so much information on the website, and we have a great search engine. The union calendar is consistently being updated with links to Zoom meetings. Don't forget, even if you don't have a FB account, all our FB posts are on the homepage of our website. You should never feel like you don't know what's going on with the Union.

CUPE728's Sun Run/Walk Training Clinic is going well. We are meeting twice a week. Our team is made up of Teachers and CUPE members. The Sun Run is on April 19th so if you know someone that is going in it, make sure you cheer them on!

In solidarity, Marcey Campbell



CARETAKERS

In light of the recent tragedies in Tumbler Ridge, many of us are reflecting on how quickly an ordinary day can change. As caretakers, and maintenance staff, we play a vital role in keeping our workplaces safe not only through our daily tasks, but through our awareness, preparedness, and commitment to health and safety policies and procedures.

Health and safety policies are not just paperwork, they are living guidelines designed to protect workers, students, and the public. When critical incidents occur, whether due to violence, accidents, or other emergencies, the foundation of preparedness lies in training, communication, and vigilance. Reviewing site-specific safety plans, understanding emergency response procedures, and knowing evacuation and lockdown protocols can make a meaningful difference in outcomes.

One of the most important steps we can take is to actively participate in safety meetings and refresher training. Ensure you know where emergency equipment is located, how to report hazards promptly, and who to contact in a crisis. Caretakers are often the first to notice changes in building conditions or unusual activity. Trusting your instincts and reporting concerns early can help prevent escalation.

We must also support one another. Tragic events affect communities deeply, and mental health is a key part of workplace safety. Check in with coworkers, access employee assistance programs when needed, and generate a culture where speaking up about safety concerns is encouraged and respected.

Preparedness is about awareness without panic. By reinforcing our commitment to established safety procedures, staying alert, and working together, we strengthen not only our workplaces but our entire community. In challenging times, solidarity, communication, and adherence to health and safety standards remain our strongest tools for prevention and response.

For assistance feel free to contact me or further assistance Telus Health through the employee family assistance program.

In solidarity, Edward Parsotam

TELUS Health
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Call: 1-888-625-1136

Online: onetelushealth.com

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.

Dawn M. – sympathy Linh L. – sympathy
Kim T. – retirement

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.



ELECTION

As many of you are aware, it's CUPE 728 Election season! Below you will find important dates and Zoom links for each meeting.

You must pre-register for each meeting using your FIRST and LAST name.

March 11th, 2026 – Hybrid Union meeting at 8:00pm via Zoom - nominations for the available positions. See the Bylaws for requirements.

Register in advance for this meeting: March 11 – 8:00pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Ooi6W0DHSCShngNBYiasUg>

April 22, 2026 – Hybrid Union meeting at 6:00pm via Zoom – come out to hear the nominees do their 3-minute statements.

- *3-minute statements from Nominees*
- *No nominations will be taken at this meeting.*

Register in advance for this meeting: April 22 – 6:00pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/wvLhAWp0SGe4iavsU-chzw>

April 25th, 2026 – Online Only 10:00am via Zoom – Election Day!

- *No nominations will be taken at this meeting.*
- *No running from the floor*

Register in advance for this meeting: April 25 – 10:00am
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Rdb6cvHYTvCI FqarZdAXXg>



STRONG START FACILITATORS

Please join us March 12th, 2026, starting at 4:00 p.m. for a Strong Start meeting.

This meeting is *online only*.

Please pre-register for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/L8N_yJ1zRe2DdOVrzO6lcA

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8, 2026



Take action, check out link for more information

<https://cupe.ca/event/international-womens-day>