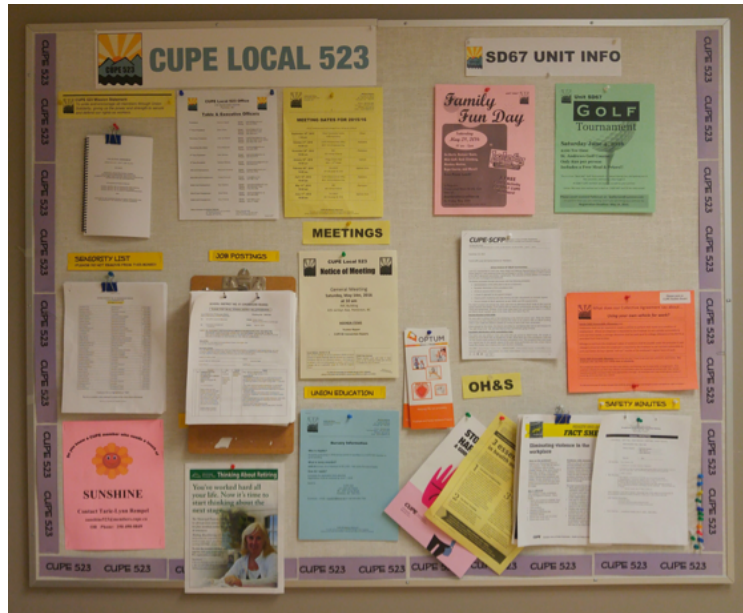


CUPE 523 Chronicle



What Have We Accomplished?

Table of Contents

Know your contract.....2
 President’s message.....3
 Unit news
 Unit 67.....4
 Unit 53.....5
 John Howard.....6
 Unit 83.....6
 NOYFSS.....7
 Contact Info.....8

Someone commented to me recently that she didn’t really see the strength in our union and that caused me to think a lot about what we do and whether we are making a difference. I’ve been compiling a mental list of all the people we have helped, the changes to the collective agreement that we

have been part of and the improvements we have seen in our workplaces. It hasn’t all been rainbows and unicorns but we have definitely been making an impact.

The strength of our union comes from the commitment level of it’s members. We have the power to have

an impact because together we are strong. If we are willing to work together and stand up for what is right and what works best for our members, we can help each other and because of that we can help our clients and students. Read my list of recent improvements on page 3.

Upcoming Events

- December 16, 2017 - Unit meeting in Oliver for SD53 members
- January 6, 2018 - Sledding Party for Unit 83 - Rancho School
- February 3, 2018 - General Meeting in Vernon for all CUPE 523 members
- March 9/10 - Election Meeting - Various sites TBA



KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

In the School Districts

ARTICLE 10: SENIORITY

(a) Definition

Seniority is length of service with the Employer and, except as provided for in Articles 10(b) and 10(c) with respect to temporary employment, shall date from the original date of commencing work.

The Employer shall maintain a seniority list showing the commencement date of each employee's seniority. An up-to-date seniority list shall be sent to the Union and posted on all bulletin boards in April and November of each year. The Employer shall be notified within thirty (30) days of any errors. The determination of seniority shall be in accordance with the earning system in effect at the time of the alleged error

Seniority shall operate on a bargaining-unit-wide basis within each school district only.

A random process mutually agreed upon by the Employer and the Union shall be used for determining seniority tie breakers.

In the Social Services contract

ARTICLE 12 - SENIORITY

12.1 Seniority Defined

(a) Seniority includes employment with the Employer prior to certification and will be as follows:

- (1) Regular full-time employees will have a seniority date, which includes all seniority as a regular part-time employee and as a casual employee and will include all absences for which seniority continues to accumulate.
- (2) Regular part-time employees will accrue seniority based on all hours paid.
- (3) Casual employees will accrue seniority on an hourly basis for all hours paid.
- (4) For the purpose of part-time and casual seniority, seniority will be credited as all hours paid for and will include all absences for which seniority continues to accumulate.
- (5) Upon achieving regular full-time employee status, a part-time or a casual employee will have their hourly seniority converted to a seniority date. The resulting date will be deemed to be the employee's seniority date.
- (6) Regular full-time employees who are returned to either part-time or casual status will have their seniority converted to hours.

President's Report

There is a lot of speculation these days about whether unions are necessary and whether they make a difference. I, along with many others, think that we do make a huge difference and that the work we do is hard but worthwhile.

For generations that came before us work was often physical labour for 12 hours a day, six days a week. Health and safety legislation was non-existent and working conditions were often dangerous. We are forever grateful to those who stood up to employers and the government to fight for change. Work weeks are shorter, we take 2 day weekends and we can legislate that helps keep us safe at work. Does that mean that all the work is done?

You don't have to look very hard to find examples of what would happen if unions were to pack up and go home right now. Governments in the USA and Ontario are bringing in 'Right to Work' legislation (which undermines the

strength of unions and weakens the employees ability to fight for good working conditions), people are taking work home in our own workplaces because there isn't enough paid time in the day to finish the work we must do, we are being told to 'lower our standards' and asked to do more work with less paid time, and we are seeing the weakening of OH&S legislation right here in BC.

So, what have we accomplished lately? We have been lobbying for adequate paid hours which resulted in the Learning Improvement Fund to compensate Education Assistants for prep time and meeting time. We hope that this will eventually translate into full-time work. We have stopped one of our employers from assigning overtime work at straight time wages, we have lobbied successfully for a number of leaves of absence to accommodate family commitments, and we have successfully prevented members from being



disciplined and dismissed unfairly, and we successfully lobbied to increase EA hours in school districts. We have also successfully negotiated wage increase and held the employers to the collective agreement on temporary positions, 'in lieu of benefits' language, and layoff notices.

Is there work to be done? You better believe it. Currently we are lobbying for fair distribution of leaves of absence, longer hours, better pay, and safe workplaces. You can help.

In Solidarity,
Sylvia Lindgren
President
CUPE 523



Unit 67

CUPE 523 Unit 67 had their Unit Meeting on November 18th where we discussed our E.I. Rebate and elected the Unit Chair, 7 stewards positions, and reps to the following committees: Good and Welfare, OH&S, Education and Communication. We are pleased to announce all the above listed positions have been filled and we are looking forward to seeing great and exciting things happen at Local 67.

Because we have short term disability insurance, the government reimburses part of our EI contributions each year and our unit has elected to pool the money to be spent according to member's wishes. Here is a list of how we voted to allocate our E.I. Rebates for 2018:
Retirement top up
Student Bursaries top up

District Science Fair
Dry Grad donations for all 3 high schools
The Tanzania field trip
Spring Family Fun day at Loco-landing
Our first winter family fun day at Apex
Elementary and middle schools meal program
A Community Fund
Good and Welfare at unit meetings

We are looking forward to the new year and all that it has to offer us as a local. This will be another great year ahead and we wish that you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year with your loved ones.

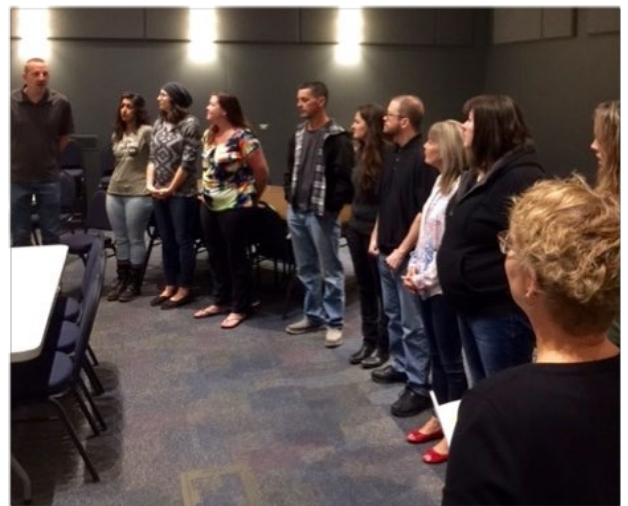
Tammy Carter (Communication Committee)
Dean Brotto (Unit Chair)



November 3-5 I was fortunate to attend the BC NDP Convention in Victoria. There was a large CUPE presence. Two CUPE Sisters have been elected as MLA's for the party in the Election. Our CUPE BC President Paul Faoro was elected as a Vice President for the Party and our Local 523 President was elected as a Regional Rep for the Southern Interior. My highlight was meeting Premier John Horgan.

Dean Brotto
Unit 67 Chair

President, Sylvia Lindgren swearing in new members at the Penticton General Meeting



Are Paid Breaks a Thing?

According to the Labour Standards for BC paid breaks are not a guaranteed right in the workplace. Fortunately for us, paid breaks have been negotiated into our collective agreements and are one of the rights we enjoy.

In the school districts, as per article 16(d), employees are entitled to one paid break if they work more than three hours but less than six hours. If they work 6 hours or more they are entitled to two paid 15 minute breaks. This work day should include the LIF (Learning Improvement Fund) hours. For example, I work 5.5 hours a day plus I work a Lunch Hour Supervisors position of .75 hr. and because I work in SD83 I get .25 hours a day of LIF time. This totals 6.5 hours. I am entitled to two breaks of 15 minutes each. Similarly, if an EA in SD67 works a six hour or longer day including their lunch hour duties (which are included in their district), they are entitled to two paid breaks.

In Social Services, as per article 14.3, the breaks are very similar. An employee who works more than 3.5 hours but less than six hours is entitled to one break and if they work six hours or more, they get two. As in the school districts, these breaks are paid and are part of the total number of hours worked.

Lunch breaks are dealt with in article 16(c) for the schools and article 14.4 in the social services contract. Meals breaks are unpaid and must be scheduled for no more than 60 minutes (any longer constitutes a split shift which are not allowed). An employee should be able to leave their place of work during their meal break. If they are required to stay on site during their meal break, their meal break is included in their work hours for that day, essentially making it a third paid break.

Unit 53

Ray Haddow was reelected as the unit chair in the Osoyoos/Oliver unit and looks forward to serving over the next two years. Shop stewards were not elected at this meeting as they have one more year on their term. If you are interested in becoming a shop steward please contact Ray and let him know. The members at the unit meeting on December 16 voted in favour of spending their EI rebate on several great causes in the area including donations to the food banks, volunteer fire departments, vulnerable kids, and the Boys and Girls Clubs as well as putting money towards two social events for members. If you would like to volunteer please contact Ray to find out how you can help.

John Howard Society

Fact Friday: 2017 has been our biggest year of growth ever. We obtained funding for 8 of our 19 beds at Bill's

of Haven Place, a sober living home. BC Housing provided us with funding to expand the Temporary

operate a new shelter starting in March 2018 and a new apartment starting in November 2018. We have seen more local community involvement than ever before. As a result we are able to bring over 11 million dollars into our community, create approx. 30 new jobs for qualified service providers and provide opportunities for citizens to obtain support.

A huge thank you to Interior Health, BC Housing, Community Futures, Ministry of

Social Development & Poverty Reduction, all of our stakeholders and all the citizens of Vernon who have donated to support those in need.



Place by signing a new contract with Interior Health. We received our second biggest donation ever \$220,000, which assisted us in the purchase and opening

Winter Shelter programs from one to two, from 12 hours per day to 24 and from 10 spaces to 33. The provincial government has contracted us to open and

Winter Sledding Party in Unit 83

Support Staff from School District 83 (Shuswap/N.Okanagan) have their winter sledding party coming up on Saturday, January 6 from 11:00 to 2:00 at Rancho School. There will be free hotdogs and hot chocolate and the horses will be there to give sleigh rides around Rancho loop. Bring a toboggan or crazy carpet to enjoy the hill behind the school. We will keep the fire going to keep everyone cozy and there will be small gift bags for the kids. Please pre register for this event by emailing sqlind94@gmail.com and include the gender and ages of the children who will accompany you to be sure there is a gift bag for your child. We are still looking for a few willing hands to help out so let us know if you can serve hot chocolate or cook hot dogs. Looking forward to seeing you there.

North Okanagan Youth and Family Social Services



Season's greetings from NOYFSS. Everyone has been working hard to serve the clients in the Vernon area. Craig and his team of shop stewards are available to answer any questions you might have regarding your collective agreement or incidents in the workplace.

Winter schools applications have been approved and one member from NOYFSS will be attending the

week long training for shop stewarding. If you are interested in spring school please watch the union boards for notices. Dates for week long spring school will be announced in the new year. Training is held in Kamloops.

If there are any news stories you would like to share with this publication please submit them to sqlind94@gmail.com.

Upcoming Bargaining

Bargaining for both the social services sector and K-12 Education sector are due to begin this year. Both sectors have collective agreements that will expire in 2019 so we are looking ahead and doing our planning now. This round of bargaining may look a little different than the last couple as we have a new government sitting in the capital and they have a significantly different mandate than the last one. Its not to say that this round of bargaining will be a walk in the park. This government has made it clear that fiscal responsibility is a high priority for them and they are making decisions, such as continuing the Site C Dam, in order to keep taxes low, reduce user fees and still provide the services we expect in BC. However, for the last 16 years they have also been very vocal about cuts to social services and education cutting into the very fabric of our society and what we believe in this province. If you have ideas about what we should be bargaining for, it's very important that you take your ideas to your unit chair or shop stewards so that these ideas can be discussed by the executive. All ideas will be considered and everyone's input is greatly appreciated.

Executive Changes

There have been a couple of changes on the executive of CUPE 523. Most of us are still here but we would like to recognize the long service of Karsten Bellows and Deb Johnson. Karsten and Deb have stepped back from union duty for personal reasons and they will be sorely missed. These two positions, along with the rest of the executive, will be up for election in March. If you have some organizational skills, talent for talking to people, and a desire to help improve our work places please consider running for a position. Training is available so don't be afraid to jump in. For more information contact one of your shop stewards or your unit chair.



CUPE 523 executive:

President Sylvia Lindgren
1st VP: vacant
2nd VP: vacant
3rd VP: Charlene Turnbull
Rec Sec: Erica McDowell
Sec Treas: Jose van Berkel

Unit chairs:

JHS	Danielle Tearoe
NOYFSS	Craeg Pohorelic
SD 53	Ray Haddow
SD 67	Dean Botto
SD 83	Tammie Koroluk

Trustees:

Nancy Boisvenue
Bonny Keir
Sandi Ward

Committees:

Occupational Health and Safety
Entertainment
Education
Good and Welfare
Shop Stewards
Communication

National Rep: Sheena Murdoch

Our office:

288 Westminster Ave.
Penticton, BC

Our phone number:
250-492-2982

Our website:

<http://cupe523.ca>

Also, find us on Facebook

Email Address: cupe523gen@gmail.com

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Sheena Murdoch

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