

Dear Unit 83 members,

We would like to start out by thanking each and every one of you for the dedication and effort you have put into working under such challenging circumstances. The last few months have not been easy and filled with constant changes and little information to go on. This is the face of COVID-19 and each of you have “rolled with it” in honorable, creative and supportive ways. Stories of how support staff have stepped up and made a difference to students and communities during this time continue to pour in and I hope in all the chaos, you have had a moment to reflect on a job well done.

June and Beyond....

June will be an interesting and unprecedented month filled with lot of unknowns. That being said, your OH&S committee, Unit Chairs and Shop Stewards are working hard to ensure that all workplaces are safe and secure. Please follow this link and find the contact information for your Stewards and Unit Chair <https://523.cupe.ca/files/2020/02/Unit83-Contacts-2020.pdf>

Each School District has been given direction by BCPSEA to offer on site and online learning. What this will look like is based on the needs of your individual site. Your Supervisor or Administrator should be informing you of weekly plans and changes. Please let your Stewards or Unit Chair know if this is not being communicated. At this time, we have not been given any information of what September will look like but will continue to work closely with School District Staff throughout the summer and into the fall.

Exposure Control Plan ECP

Each School District in BC is required to have an Exposure Control Plan. An ECP is a document created by a workplace in response to an identified risk, and it documents the specific and appropriate controls that will minimize or eliminate that risk. SD 83 has created this document and the Union has been informed that this has been shared with employees at the site level. It is also on the website <https://sd83.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Phase-3-Safety-Plan-Rev-3-052720.pdf>

JOHS Committee

Please take a moment to review the minutes of your school site Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee report. Each site is required to meet monthly and all meeting minutes are posted at each site. Every site committee should have met prior to students attending June 1. If you have any questions please contact your site CUPE rep or contact Unit 83 CUPE 523 Committee reps Jennifer Harper jenniferharper4321@gmail.com and James Fox james.april@shaw.ca They can assist with any health and safety concerns or questions you may have.

Short Term Disability and General Leaves for COVID Related Issues

If you have any questions about leaves to the end of the school year, please contact one of your Stewards or Roni Ault for direction and advice. The District has advised the Union that there will be no interruption in benefit coverage for regular employees who wish to take an unpaid leave from June 1 to 25 for reasons related to COVID-19. Benefit coverage will carry through to the end of August.

For some members who take a leave they may be eligible for the CERB. For information on qualifying please follow the link.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/financial-benefits>

Collective Agreement

We are getting close to finalizing the current Collective Agreement for July 2019-June 2022 We will notify members when it will be posted online to view via the School District and CUPE 523 websites. When printed copies are available, we will give members notice. Thank you for your patience through the lengthy process and if you have any questions regarding any of the Articles please reach out to your Stewards, Unit Chair or myself. An email was sent in early October identifying additions and changes to the current agreement. Please send your Unit Chair if you would like this emailed again.

Throughout this email I have referenced your Shop Stewards, Unit Chair and Executive Committee. These members have stepped up to take active roles in the daily business of our Local and have been working extremely hard to stay informed, seek information and provide assistance to all our members. I would like to Thank each of them for putting in many volunteer hours especially in the last few months. Your Stewards and Unit Chair have been meeting via TEAMS to share information and discuss current work-related issues. These are the people you can turn to when you have questions, concerns or need clarification on a particular matter. Your Stewards and Unit Chair have been elected to represent your Unit and look forward to hearing from you. Please don't hesitate to reach out to them.

Website and Facebook Page

Just a reminder to check out our Facebook page and website for local information. Our website lists contacts, previous emails and up to date COVID information. If there is something you wish to see on these sites please share those ideas with our Recording Secretary Erica McDowell rec_sec@cupe523.com or our Communications Vice President Charlene Turnbull 2vp@cupe523.com

We would also like to thank each of you for the emails, phone calls and well wishes you would have sent our way. Your questions have been great, and we are grateful for the emails outlining your concerns as rank and file members. Your Unit Chair has had weekly contact and meetings

with the district and has raised those issues and will continue this process through the next month and beyond.

On behalf of the Executive, we wish each of you a safe month at work and home. Please take some time to enjoy moments of rest and relaxation. While we still maintain physical distancing and are mourning the loss of many of our usual pre summer activities I know that we will create alternate plans that give us joy, hope and happiness.

In Solidarity,

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Roni Ault
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