



# **Local 523 REPORTS**

***For November 2023***

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## **UNIT REPORTS:**

### **SD67 - Okanagan Skaha**

#### **Grievances:**

- 1 withdrawn
- 1 in abeyance
- 1 recently submitted

#### **Unit Reps:**

- Shop Stewards
  - Roberta Hormes
  - James Gross
  - Sara Vroylyk
  - Deb Rivest
  - Bonnie Harksamp
  - Molly Ehmann
  - Pat Styles
- Communication
  - Kristy Barnay
- Good and Welfare
  - Deb Rivest
- OH&S
  - Allyson Erickson
  - Blyn Loewen

#### **Training:**

- Finished 2 day JE training in October with 7 other CUPE reps.
- New CUPE Orientation run on Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Bargaining Issues:**

- Tiered pay scale – more pay for service and training

- 12 month pay cheque (or 10 months)
- 7-8 hour days work days

**Unit Activities:**

- Getting ready to give away the EI funds!!!

**In Solidarity,**

**Terri Phillips**

**Unit Chair, CUPE Local 523**

[unit67@cupe523.com](mailto:unit67@cupe523.com)

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## **SD53 - Okanagan Similkameen**

**Grievance:** 1 still ongoing

**Unit Reps:**

**Stewards:** Kris Keith, Heather Owens, Gerald Lesmeister, Susan Zomar

**Communication Rep:** Kim Dragseth

**OH&S Rep:** Charlene Turnbull and Heather Owens

**Education Rep:** Anne Selsing

**Entertainment Committee:** Heather Owens & Sharlene Fernandes

**Good & Welfare Rep.** Susan Zomar

**Training:** There is steward training available for anyone that wants to become a steward. Please reach out to your unit Chair for more information.

**Bargaining Issues:**

- We are still waiting on new 2023-2025 collective Agreement final draft has happened so please keep the look out on our website for the new copy.
- The distribution of extra hours not going out by seniority this is something that I have been finding out in all departments, I will be looking at language to bring forward to change in the next bargaining round.

**Unit Activities:**

- Please make sure that you are always checking your earning statements every pay period and making sure they are correct, we have had lots of glitches with our systems, and it is important to be checking them each pay period.
- Please make sure that we have your Personal email and Cell #'s as we will be starting a simple texting to get information out to members. The Union is really working hard on communicating with members and this will help with lost information.

- If you moved or your status changes, we need to update our files, so please reach out to Kim Dragseth as she is our Communications rep for our School District Unit.
- If you don't receive emails, please go to our website and there is a link to subscribe to TEXT & EMAILS.
- All information is located on our Local 523 website, you can also join our Facebook page!!! **Stay informed!**
- Christmas/Retirement party is happening Dec 2, 2023, I can't wait to see everyone please bring a nonperishable food item(s) for the food bank, and please don't drink and drive.
- Unit meeting was held November 4, 2023, we went over the distribution of EI funds, we had only 5 people show up which is very disappointing. Please remember that attending meetings is important as everyone's voice should be heard. Next meeting will be in the Spring and I will hold it in person so hopefully we have a good attendance.

### **Challenges:**

- Some obstacles I find is getting out and meeting members, as a Unit Chair I will be working hard at getting out to sites and introducing myself.
- Having members attend general and unit meetings, attending meetings is especially important.
- Understand your rights as an employee. Please make sure you reach out to myself or a steward if to have any concerns or questions.
- We also need to remember not to use our school district email for union work, please only use your personal one!! Please reach out at any time to your Unit Chair or stewards if you have any questions or concerns.
- Not having enough Stewards is a challenge or site Communication person, if you or you know someone interested in this please reach out to your Unit Chair.
  - A site communication person helps get information out to members and makes sure the CUPE bulletin Boards are up to date.
  - A Steward is a Union representative that will help with members when situations arise in the worksites. Training is provided!

**In Solidarity,**  
**Charlene Turnbull**  
**Unit Chair SD53**  
**CUPE Local 523**  
[Unit53@cupe523.com](mailto:Unit53@cupe523.com)

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## **SD83 - North Okanagan Shuswap**

**Shop Stewards:** Eric Martello, Richard Scott, Valerie Dean, Jennifer Harper, Cheri Calvert. Kandace Turnbull

**Good & Welfare:** Jennifer Harper

**Communication:** Kim Bojey

**Entertainment:** Morgan Willson

**Wellness:** Courtney Thomson

**Health & Safety:** Angela Kahan, Amanda Thielen

**Education:** Valerie Dean

**Environmental Ad. Hoc. Working Group:** Chelie Elson

**National Convention October 23-27 Quebec City.** - President, 1VP, Secretary Treasure, Unit Chair 83, and a member from SD67.

**Unit Activities:** Winter Party Jan?

**Movie Afternoon**– Nov 12, 2023, Classic Theater (Salmon Arm Theatre)

**CUPE Pro D Event –Oct 20, 2023 (members picked this date rather than the February date)**

The Pro D was held at SAS. Breakfast snacks were offered by CUPE and the District put on lunch. There were four different offerings and the same ones in the afternoon. It was a good turnout with almost 150 members.

**Unit Concerns:**

The grievances procedures are taking too long, they are not matching up with our CA (Collective Agreement) guidelines.

**Health and Safety.** - Worksafe has been involved this month and we are working with the employer to ensure that the process and procedures are in place and welcomed by all the locations.

**Health and Safety CUPE reps:** We meet once a month to go over minutes from all locations. We are collaborating on where the minutes will be filed so the committee has access to them.

**Host days for the CEA's there are two options-** The employer had come to the union to ask if we could work on this together. We sent out a form to gather information on what the concerns are so we could host two different days and have questions and answers as to why or what we could do in the future to help support the CEA's.

**Grievances:** SD83 currently has 4 grievances, one going to mediation and two investigations.

**Member Orientation:** March 2024

**In Solidarity,**  
**Courtney Thomson**  
**Unit 83 Chair**  
**CUPE Local 523**  
[Unit83@cupe523.com](mailto:Unit83@cupe523.com)

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## **NOYFSS**

No report at this time.

**In Solidarity,**  
**Samantha Robinson**  
**NOYFSS Unit Chair**  
**CUPE Local 523**  
[noyfss@cupe523.com](mailto:noyfss@cupe523.com)

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## **Turning Points**

No report at this time.

**In Solidarity,**  
**Zoey Froemgen**  
**TPCS Unit Chair**  
**CUPE Local 523**  
[tpcs@cupe523.com](mailto:tpcs@cupe523.com)

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## **SCS**

**Grievances:** None

### **Unit Reps:**

**Unit Chair** – On leave

**Good and Welfare** - ST has been filling in with the good and welfare as it comes up.

**Shop Steward** - Devyn Ayris is a shop steward and participated in the shop steward training last month.

**Health and Safety** - Shawn Carter is the OH&S rep at work as well as on the local health and safety committee.

### **Unit Activities:**

I will be setting up a unit meeting but am waiting for the meeting with HR first so that the members can vote on their E.I. funds and hopefully a MOA as well.

In Solidarity,

**Tammy Carter,**

**President local 523 reporting**

**CUPE Local 523**

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# **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

# **Health & Safety** – President

OH&S Report (OH&S - Occupational Health and Safety)

As the fall season turns into the winter season, the OH&S team would like to remind everyone about staying safe in the cold and icy conditions.

We are also wanting to remind everyone about a few things regarding:

- An OH&S Site Committees,
- Right to refuse unsafe work,
- Provide some work wellness resources,

## **OH&S Site Committee Representatives**

The information below is a very short overview of what a committee is. There is more information available. If you are interested, please reach out to your unit chair and they will get you more information.

### **What are joint committees?**

A joint committee is made up of workers and employer representatives working together to promote health and safety in the workplace. While the employer is ultimately responsible for overall safety at the workplace, the committee is responsible for identifying health and safety problems and recommending solutions to the employer.

### **As a committee, your role in the workplace includes the following:**

Promoting workplace health and safety

- Consulting with workers and employers about worker health and safety
- Making recommendations to improve occupational health and safety, the occupational environment, and the effectiveness of occupational health and safety programs and policies
- Promoting compliance with the OHS provisions of the Workers Compensation Act and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.
- The committee must meet at least once a month.
- The committee must take accurate minutes as instructed by work safe. Minutes must be recorded and posted in the workplace for at least three months. Provide a copy to the local manager/supervisor. The supervisor must make minutes available to the union.
- Minutes must be retained for at least two years and be accessible to staff and WorkSafeBC. Meeting minutes on shared drives or SharePoint accessible to all staff is considered acceptable by WorkSafeBC
- There is an 8-hour mandatory training for new site reps as well as an 8-hour training opportunity for all site reps, this should be offered to all yearly.

If you are interested in being a site representative, please reach out to your unit chair. If you are a site representative and have no idea about the above information, please contact your unit chair immediately as this is a huge problem.

## **The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work.**

### **Steps to Follow When Work Might Be Unsafe**

#### **#1 Report the unsafe condition or procedure**

As a worker, you must immediately stop the work and report the unsafe condition to your employer or supervisor.

- As an employer or supervisor, you must investigate the matter and fix it if possible. If you do not agree with the worker that the condition is unsafe, report back to the worker.
- If the worker and the employer or supervisor can't agree on how to resolve the matter, move to step 2. As employer or supervisor, if you believe the work can safely be done by another worker while the matter is under investigation, you must:
  - Give notice in writing to the workers assigned or permitted to do the work
  - Give notice in writing to a worker representative of the joint health and safety committee, a union representative, or other worker, as applicable
  - Ensure the written notice includes:
    - The refusal and the reported unsafe condition
    - Reasons why the task would not create an undue hazard
    - The workers' right to refuse the work

#### **#2 If the matter is not resolved in step 1**

Both the worker and the employer or supervisor must investigate the matter in the presence of one of the following:

A worker representative of the joint health and safety committee (or worker health and safety representative)

- A worker chosen by the worker's trade union.
- Any other worker chosen by the worker who first reported the unsafe condition

#### **#3 If the matter is still not resolved, notify WorkSafeBC**

If the matter is not resolved after following steps 1 and 2, both the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC. Call 604.276.3100, or toll-free 1.888.621.7233. A prevention officer will then investigate and take steps to find a workable solution.

**For more information about the refusal process, please see [OHS Guideline G3.12](#)<sup>8</sup>**

Did you know that some Employers are telling members that they do not need to report or fill out any forms when they are injured or even in a near miss situation. This is wrong and against the regulations. If this is happening to you or another member, please report to the union through your unit chair as soon as possible.

#### **Work Wellness Resources. Below are some resources that may be of interest.**

Best Practices for Accommodating Mental Health Disabilities in the Workplace

Canadian Human Rights Commission

<https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/your-guide-understanding-canadian-human-rights-act-page1>

Common Accommodation Strategies for Mental Health Conditions

<https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/accommodation-strategies>



Supporting Employee Success: A tool to help employees be successful at work

<https://wsmh-cms.mediresource.com/wsmh/assets/ocxovploxes004ow>

Impaired at Work: A guide to accommodation substance dependence

<https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/impaired-work-guide-accommodating-substance-dependence>

Harnessing Talent: Alliance for recruiting and retaining Canadians with disabilities

<https://workwellnessinstitute.org/harnessing-talent-alliance/>

Supporting Employees Returning to Work

<https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/getting-support-when-you-return-to-work>

The Local OH&S team wishes you all a safe and healthy fall/winter season and we hope that you find time to enjoy your friends, family and take care of yourself as well. We would also remind everyone of the importance of health and safety and if you need any assistance in these areas, you are encouraged to reach out to your unit chair for assistance. The local contact lists are regularly updated on the local 523 website. [CUPE 523 – Representing school and social service workers in the Okanagan](#)

If we do not reach out formally before the Christmas Holidays, we wish you all a wonderful holiday and the coming season.

Respectfully submitted by Tammy Carter, President Local 523 and Local 523s OH&S Chair.

**In Solidarity,**

**Tammy Carter**  
**President, CUPE Local 523**  
[president@cupe523.com](mailto:president@cupe523.com)

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**Education** – 3rd Vice President

The Education Committee met via email to discuss candidates for the weeklong Winter School held in Harrison. There were 10 candidates who applied for various classes, and an initial selection of 5 delegates. This was later changed, as it was determined that the budget would allow for more delegates, resulting in all who applied being approved. This is, in my opinion, an incredibly wise decision as each candidate was determined to be taking an incredibly active role within the union and would greatly better the ability of the union to operate for the benefit of all.

We also deliberated and met via email, deciding to send 1 member for education regarding her position within the union. This was unrelated to Winter School.

I thank the committee immensely for their consideration and time put into these processes and believe that none of this would be possible without their significant efforts.

**In Solidarity,  
Devon Brindley  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
CUPE Local 523**

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## **Communication** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

No report at this time.

**In Solidarity,  
Acting Chair:  
Devon Brindley  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
CUPE Local 523**

**And Erica McDowell, Recording Secretary, CUPE Local 523**

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## **Good & Welfare** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President

Since our last General Meeting we have the following to report:

**NOYFSS**- 3 instances of bereavement for which gift cards of **\$50** were sent.  
1 instance of extended leave for which a gift card of **\$50** dollars was sent.

**SD83**- 1 birth to celebrate (Congratulations!) and a card and gift card sent for **\$50**.  
1 instance of Bereavement for which a gift card of **\$50** was sent.

Thanks to the committee for the continued effort they put in in order to recognize those members of our union who are grieving, celebrating, or otherwise. A reminder to reach out to your Unit's good and welfare representative if you know of a member we can reach out to!

**In Solidarity,  
Devon Brindley  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
CUPE Local 523**

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## **SIDC (Southern Interior District Council) (OMDC Okanagan Mainline District Council) - <https://omdc.cupe.ca>**

OMDC (Okanagan Mainline District Council) have officially changed their name, but the bylaws need to be changed to reflect the name change first.

The November meeting will take place on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Penticton. They do hybrid options as well if you want to join online. If you are attending the meeting in person, please let Tammy know as soon as possible. We need to let OMDC know who is in person so they can order enough lunch and not too many lunches.

A reminder this meeting is open to executives and members. If you have someone who would like to attend these meetings, please contact them and Tammy and we can get this going. Our full delegates to be able to attend OMDC with voting rights are 7 or 8. We can have more attend if we wish.

The next meetings will be as follows -

November 25<sup>th</sup> in Penticton – Tammy will be going for sure and will report back.

January 27<sup>th</sup> in Vernon

May 4<sup>th</sup> in West Kelowna

Thank you and hope to see you all there.

Tammy is reporting due to the vacancy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president.

If you are interested in attending this meeting, please reach out to Tammy Carter.

**In Solidarity,**  
**Tammy Carter**  
**President, CUPE Local 523**  
[president@cupe523.com](mailto:president@cupe523.com)

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## **NOLC (North Okanagan Labour Council)**

North Labour Council NOLC (TPCS, NOYFSS or SD83)

We have 7 delegates that can attend these meetings. As of right now, we only have two people attending. They are meeting over zoom and it is easy to join in on the meetings. They meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm and take the summer months off from meetings. If you are from either TPCS, NOYFSS or SD83 and would like to attend these meetings, please send an email to Tammy Carter, President of Local 523 at [president@cupe523.com](mailto:president@cupe523.com)

Those who attend will report back to the local on what was discussed and what is happening within the labour council. Check out the NOBLCs website for further information <https://www.oklabour.org/>

## **SOBLC (South Okanagan Boundary Labour Council)**

South Okanagan Labour Council SOBLC (SD67, SD53 or SCS)

We have 7 delegates that can attend these meetings. As of right now, we only have one person attending. They are meeting over zoom and it is easy to join in on the meetings. They meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm and take the summer months off from meetings. If you are from either SD53 or SD67 and would like to attend these meetings, please send an email to Tammy Carter, President of Local 523 at [president@cupe523.com](mailto:president@cupe523.com) Those who attend will report back to the local on what was discussed and what is happening within the labour council. There is currently a vacancy for the treasurer position.

Check out the SOBLCs website <https://www.southokanaganlabour.ca/> and their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SOBLC> for further information.