

2012



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Provincial table set for Nov. 5-9

Bargaining is slated to start for CUPE's 26,000 education support workers in B.C. public schools. Talks at the provincial table have been scheduled for Nov. 5-9 with additional tentative dates later in November and December. Local bargaining committees are also gearing up in 57 CUPE K-12 locals across the province.

K-12 Presidents' Council chair Colin Pawson says that "after the modest gains and government-imposed Zero Mandate in the last round of bargaining, a united CUPE K-12 will be looking for significant improvements to wages, job security and pension language."

Pawson added that "in light of recent public-sector settlements we are optimistic that this round of bargaining can be productive and be settled without unnecessary delay."

The Council Bargaining Subcommittee has been identifying provincial priorities. The subcommittee consists of Pawson (Chair, Metro Vancouver), Wendy Johnson (Thompson-Okanagan), June Kaiser (Metro Vancouver), Leslie Franklin (Fraser Valley), Cherryl MacLeod (Kootenays), Daphne Ross (North Island), Jan Peever (South Island) and Paula Cox (Northern Area).

CUPE's team will present proposals for a two-year agreement with fair and reasonable wage increases to reflect inflation and, where needed, provincial funding for wage regionalization and internal equity. The bargaining subcommittee will be pressing for job security proposals designed to address declining enrollment, school calendar changes and bringing work into CUPE bargaining units.

The provincial bargaining team will also be negotiating for enrollment in the Municipal Pension Plan for CUPE members after 450 hours of work as well as getting improvements to extended health benefits through plan standardization. They will also press for new skills enhancement funds for members.

The bargaining committee will continue to work for education assistants to be guaranteed 32 hours a week plus three hours consultation & planning time. The committee also plans to open the discussion on standardization of EA qualifications and credentials.

CUPE K-12 Coordinator Bill Pegler is the chief spokesperson for the table. Updates on bargaining are available at bcschools.cupe.ca or on twitter at @CUPEbcschools