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Bulletin No. 16

Framework ratified – focus on next round

BURNABY– CUPE K-12 Presidents' Council Locals have now all ratified the Provincial Framework Agreement with the BC Public School Employers' Association. The final vote took place this week.

The two-year agreement from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2012 was overwhelmingly endorsed by CUPE's Provincial Bargaining Committee and Presidents' Council. The locals represent 26,000 members in B.C.'s public school system.

"The agreement includes significant new funding and resources that will benefit the entire public education system," said CUPE spokesperson Bill Pegler. "We made major strides in our campaign to cut unpaid work by Education Assistants and we have a commitment to build a framework for provincial bargaining."

Now comes the implementation of the hard-won Support Staff Learning Improvement Fund. The \$7.5 million fund is designed to help pay Education Assistants for some of the unpaid work they already do. Exactly how the money is used will be negotiated between the locals and the school boards. Those negotiations are underway to ensure that plans for spending the money are in place by September.

Presidents' Council to meet

With the ratification process complete, the CUPE K-12 Presidents' Council is focusing on 2012 bargaining. The council will meet in Richmond on May 24 to decide on when the next round should begin, to discuss strategy and to start identifying bargaining priorities at the local and provincial levels. More than 50 presidents are expected at the one-day session.

Bargaining survey launched

To help the process along, CUPE has launched the first ever voluntary province-wide K-12 bargaining survey. The online member survey will assist local bargaining committees and the provincial bargaining committee in setting 2012 bargaining priorities. The survey will remain open until at least mid-June and interim reports will be prepared for the upcoming Presidents' Council meeting.

Members are encouraged to contact their local for more information and complete the survey so our bargaining committees are briefed with the issues important to you. The survey takes about 10 minutes and CUPE members are encouraged get their fellow workers to fill it out as well.