

CUPE K-12



WELCOME BACK!

I hope everyone had a good week and that orientations went smoothly. If issues come up around safety or a concern with the district's safety plan, contact your site health and safety committee representative. Site committees can bring issues to the district joint health and safety committee for further action.

Please continue to visit bcschools.cupe.ca as we will update information as it changes.

In solidarity and safety,

Warren Williams
 K-12 Presidents Council President

BUS DRIVER

I love to drive anything with a motor and a wheel, so driving bus was a natural fit! The social interaction with the kids, parents and staff are a bonus.

My role as a driver in the district is not only of safety and transportation, but of teaching and modelling social responsibility. Given the present circumstances we face daily, my focus will be to demonstrate adapting one's behaviour with kindness and calmness. Starting and ending the kids' school day gives me the greatest privilege and responsibility. It's important to be in the moment instead of focusing on when this pandemic might disappear.

Sherri Kreklau
 CUPE 716 (Richmond)

HORTICULTURIST/GROUNDS

It's harder to work because we have to socially distance. We constantly sanitize our hands and equipment. Safety protocols are definitely more involved. Things have changed, and we're really careful. We do our utmost to keep everyone safe.

Our work is even more important now, because the outdoors is being utilized more at schools – especially the fields. The fields are considered an outdoor classroom, a place where students play, learn, and exercise. It takes a lot of work to keep these grounds safe and functioning properly. Playing fields, particularly the sport fields, require a great deal of horticultural work to

ensure that students can be out there on living grass instead of mud. We're proud of our work and happy to see this.

Richard Prevost
 CUPE 606 (Nanaimo/Ladysmith)

CLERICAL

I started back a couple of weeks ago. The school was clean, and we're all aware of our roles. We modelled our re-opening on the district health and safety plan. We're a little different than elementary schools, but I think we have a pretty good plan in place. The kids are resilient and will pick it up. I know that the staff has.

Things seem to be going smoothly. I enjoy my work and having the kids back. I deal with student records and assist with the scheduling. We have lots of new staff, and learning and teaching new things keeps me coming back.

Becky Rousseau
 CUPE 440 (Golden)

IT

We're pretty much always helping someone. The work itself might not be super glamorous, but I always feel appreciated. We had been investing in online tools for the last couple of years and had Microsoft Teams rolling before the pandemic. We had to step up training and support.

With schools being open, there's less training but there's always computers to fix. In our district, each IT worker

supports five or six schools – we provide consistency. If the teacher has a lesson plan that involves the computer, it will actually work. They can rely on the technology when they plan an online lesson or a virtual field trip.

Kyle Clark
 CUPE 523 (Okanagan/Shuswap)

EDUCATION ASSISTANT

We were so happy to open the school to our kids and the kids were happy. Children are actually very intelligent. Once they are shown and taught how things have changed for them, for their safety, they're very good about it.

We did a lot of things to remind them of what social distancing looks like. Yesterday we showed all of our kids how to properly wash their hands, so it becomes a healthy habit. The kids get it. They know they need to wash their hands, to sanitize, to give people space.

Our school district is working hard to make schools a safe environment.

Patty Astorino
 CUPE 3742 (Prince George)

CUSTODIAN

Kids spend most of their day in school so you want to keep it clean so that they enjoy being there. This pandemic has been a nightmare. My biggest worry is that we won't have enough time to keep the school clean and safe. My kids go to school, too. I want all kids to be safe and I'll try to do whatever it takes to keep school safe. Today was the first day kids were back—that's the best thing! They're learning and doing what they are supposed to do—be kids and go to school to learn. If kids don't go to school and learn, everything is pointless. They are our future and will build our country. We need to keep schools safe for our kids.

Houman Anasory
 CUPE 1851 (Langley)