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Caring for B.C. students and public schools



Making progress on standardized EA credentials

CUPE is making exciting progress on standardizing EA credentials across the province. As negotiated in the Provincial Framework Agreement (PFA), CUPE will continue to work toward standardization of education assistant credentials and qualifications to prevent school districts from creating in-house EA qualification programs as short as two weeks in length.

Benefits of standardization

Credential standardization will increase EA hours to full-time where possible and desired. As well, it will increase classification and compensation of EAs in the public education system, ensuring that EAs are appropriately educated and equipped to provide high level assistance that will ensure the safety of students and EAs.

Key objectives of working with the Ministry

In addition to the negotiated terms and the continued work of the provincial committees, CUPE has been advocating to standardize EA credentials with the Ministry of Education. On behalf of CUPE EAs, we will continue this dialogue in the months to come.

One of our key objectives is to have standardized provincial education requirements for EAs established, with credentials offered exclusively through public post-secondary institutions.

Experienced EAs who are already working should have the opportunity to participate in additional education if desired, but this should not be mandatory for EAs with experience. We understand that the Ministry of Education recognizes the need for these improvements to the education system and will partner with CUPE on implementing these goals. This process will require time to ensure that a system for standardizing EA credentials is well-structured and robust.

Position paper makes our case

CUPE Research and National Staff have compiled a position paper titled "[Standard Credentials for Education Assistants](#)." This paper outlines CUPE's goals for credential standardization, asserts jurisdiction on the topic, and makes recommendations.

This position has been informed and developed over the past number of years with input from CUPE K-12 members throughout B.C., committees struck through the PFA, and CUPE National Research.

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

- Supporting diverse learners with complex challenges and needs requires adequate staffing levels and appropriate education
- More EAs supporting students with diverse needs and behavioural challenges are needed
- Education programs for EAs and EA qualification requirements established by school districts vary widely
- Offering standardized education programs and qualifications through public post-secondary institutions is the best way to ensure comprehensive, accessible, transferable education based on best practices and current research
- Compensation for EAs needs to be increased
- Better wages will increase EA retention and recruitment

SAVE THE DATES:

Upcoming classification calls for Education Assistants, SSWs, CEAs and similar classifications will be an opportunity to consult on priorities for standardizing EA credentials and to discuss the position paper.

Okanagan & Kootenays

April 20th 5:30-7:30 pm

Northern B.C.

April 22nd 5:30-7:30 pm

Vancouver Island & in island communities

April 27th 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Metro Vancouver & Fraser Valley

April 29th 5:30 - 7:30 pm

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