

CUPE K-12



# CUPE priorities for the return to school

With back-to-school on the horizon, the K-12 Presidents Council held a special meeting this week to discuss issues facing CUPE members as they prepare for the 2021/2022 school year. The Council discussed best practises for maintaining clean and healthy schools for both staff and students during the on-going pandemic.

The Council reaffirmed its call for **making daytime custodial services permanent throughout the K-12 education system**. Daytime custodians help reduce the spread of all diseases in our schools and their work reduces the amount of time staff and students miss due to illness. The extremely positive health benefits that students, workers, and communities have seen during the pandemic in reducing the spread of illnesses must be made permanent.

The Council supports calls for **mandatory masks in schools and on buses for students and staff for the coming school year**. With rising numbers of COVID cases, and with no approved vaccine for kids under 12 years of age, a mask mandate across the province's K-12 education system is a necessary precaution.

The Council confirmed the need to **maintain adequate isolation protocols** for students that are ill or showing symptoms of illness. CUPE wants to ensure all school districts have clear and proper procedures in place to protect students and staff, and that these practices are followed.

The Council is also calling for the province to work with school districts to ensure school ventilation systems are working properly, viable upgrades are in place for the start of the school year, and that **improvements to school ventilation are a priority in long-term infrastructure planning**.

**CUPE is speaking out on these issues directly with the BC government at the provincial K-12 Education Steering Committee.**

**Established by the province at the start of the pandemic, with representatives from all stakeholder groups, your CUPE representatives are at those Steering Committee meetings advocating for our members.**

## Immunizations

As the [province's immunization efforts](#) continue, CUPE strongly recommends vaccination in consultation with your own medical providers or practitioners.

CUPE's Health and Safety Branch has resources available for your [frequently asked questions about vaccinations](#), and the [implications on workers' rights](#) of immunization requirements. Additional resources for K-12 locals will be coming in an upcoming bulletin.

If you are asked by your employer about whether you've been vaccinated, or if they ask for any other information regarding immunization, please contact your local.