



CUPE  
EDUCATION  
WORKERS

## THE POWER OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

April 1, 2020

## MEMBERS' BULLETIN UPDATE

Dear CUPE education workers:

Yesterday the Minister of Education announced that Ontario was extending school and child care closures until the beginning of May as part of its fight against the spread of COVID-19. (FYI, school closures don't fall under Ontario's emergency powers; rather, the Minister takes guidance from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health).

At the same time, the Minister announced the second phase of the province's Learn at Home program. CUPE education workers had the heads-up on this, as in the past few days custodians have been asked to let staff into schools to retrieve materials and IT staff asked to look at redeploying computer equipment.

### What does it mean for CUPE members?

- **Employment status:** CUPE members in permanent or long-term occasional positions will keep being paid. Benefits will continue through the EWBT. Pension contributions will carry on as long as members receive their salaries.
- **Learning at Home:** the program will be teacher-led with regular contact and check-ins with students. How students take part will depend on their grade level.
- **Role of education workers:** School boards have been asked to work with unions, including CUPE, to determine how education workers can support students in their learning.

The Ministry and school boards are open to collaboration with education workers. We can bring ideas to the table and we will need to be flexible. Above all, we have to make ourselves relevant to the efforts to ensure that students can continue learning from home.

**Working groups:** In conjunction with other unions, CUPE has established three working groups with the Ministry of Labour to develop plans for the roles of education workers while schools remain closed. These working groups are:

- Custodial/Caretaker, looking at custodial, caretaker, maintenance and trades work;
- Learning Resources, addressing IT, clerical and library work;

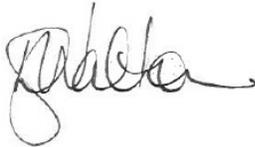
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- Instructional Support: focusing on EA, DECE, instructor, CYW, mental health supports and social worker work.

While these jobs are not exhaustive of the members CUPE and OSBCU represent, they are the overarching groups and representatives will make every attempt to address include all job classifications.

OSBCU Area VPs have already heard about some of creative and inventive initiatives taken by CUPE members who already contributing to students' continuity of learning. If you have suggestions of your own, please share them with your OSBCU Area VP.

In solidarity,



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