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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ford government leaves tens of thousands of education workers without emergency child care

TORONTO, ON – education workers in Ontario are set to return to work on January 4, but they remain excluded from the province’s emergency child care provision, according to CUPE’s Ontario School Board Council of Unions (OSBCU).

“This is a dangerous decision,” said Laura Walton, President of OSBCU. “Many of our members are at a breaking point. 20,000 of our members – custodians, maintenance workers, educational assistants, and clerical staff – are being required to physically return to brick and mortar schools. Many of them are parents of elementary-aged children and have no access to childcare.”

There are Boards who initially told clerical workers to work from home and have since reversed their decision; those of them with elementary-aged children are unable to get childcare for next week. They have been put in an impossible position.

OSBCU is continuing to call on the Minister of Education but says that the government has yet to make any commitments.

“We can’t continue to put front-line workers between a rock and a hard place,” said Walton. “Education workers want to be back at work, supporting their communities. But they want to do so in a sustainable way. That means having access to child care. They need to be included immediately – especially if the lockdown is extended.”

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