

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CUPE school board leaders endorse tentative deal that secures services for students

- Deal now proceeds to province-wide ratification votes -

TORONTO, ON – Within a week of their union securing a tentative central agreement that restores vital services to Ontario’s schools, hundreds of school board leaders gathered near Toronto today and gave their endorsement to the deal.

Leaders from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) approved the tentative settlement that was agreed last Sunday, after a weekend of intense negotiations that averted a province-wide strike by 55,000 education workers.

The leaders’ backing today kicks off two weeks of ratification votes by members of 109 CUPE bargaining units across the province.

“This deal has major wins for students, families and CUPE education workers and I’m pleased that the leaders of CUPE school board locals agree with us on that,” said Laura Walton, president of CUPE’s Ontario School Board Council of Unions (OSBCU). The council bargains centrally on behalf of CUPE members who are employees of school boards.

“This tentative agreement invests in high-quality services for students in Ontario’s schools, now and for the future. And at the same time, it ensures that education workers have secure jobs and decent benefits.”

To date, CUPE education workers are the largest group of public sector workers to negotiate with the Ford government.

“Our members were prepared to go on strike to stand up for services for students and for their own right to decent, safe, jobs. But we couldn’t have gotten the deal we did without the tremendous support that CUPE education workers received from parents, teachers’ unions, their communities and other allies,” said Walton.

“in the end, a combination of members’ readiness to take job action and public support for their action kept students in school across in Ontario.

OSBCU negotiated a tentative central agreement for the 55,000 education workers it represents across Ontario – education assistants, custodians, early childhood educators, school secretaries and clerical staff, library workers, IT technicians, maintenance and tradespeople, food service workers, child and youth workers, speech language pathologists, professionals, paraprofessionals, and others.

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