



# March 2021 Newsletter

The next GMM will be held Sunday March 28, 2021 at 7 pm

Zoom Meeting ID **971 2079 8427**

Passcode **688893**

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# President's Message

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**Dear Sisters and Brothers,**

When we think of March, we think of March break, St. Patrick's Day and some others, but there is also a very important day that is also recognized, International Women's Day. International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

With that said I am proud to announce that for the first time in the 51 years that Local 218 has been affiliated with CUPE we will be able to offer the positions for the Equity Seat. This has been on my agenda for some time, and now as President of this amazing Local I have been able to get the support from the Executive to move forward. In the coming days you will be able to find an application with details on our website.

I am also happy to announce that again, I am in the final step of creating the S.E.W Group (Safe Environment Wellness). The focus of this group of volunteers is to assist the committees in a multitude of areas. More detailed information will be forthcoming.

We have been receiving calls regarding Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Some of our members are experiencing problems with the PPE that is being provided by your employer. Please contact your Health and Safety representative if you are experiencing difficulty. Your Health and Safety representative can make recommendations for other PPE that is recognized. If the PPE is causing hardship in the way of headaches, rashes e.g. I would recommend that an incident report be submitted with the employer and a WSIB Form 8 be filed out with your treating physician.

OMERS- I wanted to give you an important update about OMERS. As you may have heard, the pension fund lost more than \$3 billion or -2.7% last year, a shortfall of more than \$10 billion compared to their own benchmark returns for 2020. This latest bad news from OMERS is the result of their decisions and CUPE Ontario will continue to oppose any attempt to make plan members pay for them. To CUPE Ontario's 120,000 active OMERS plan members, we will take action.

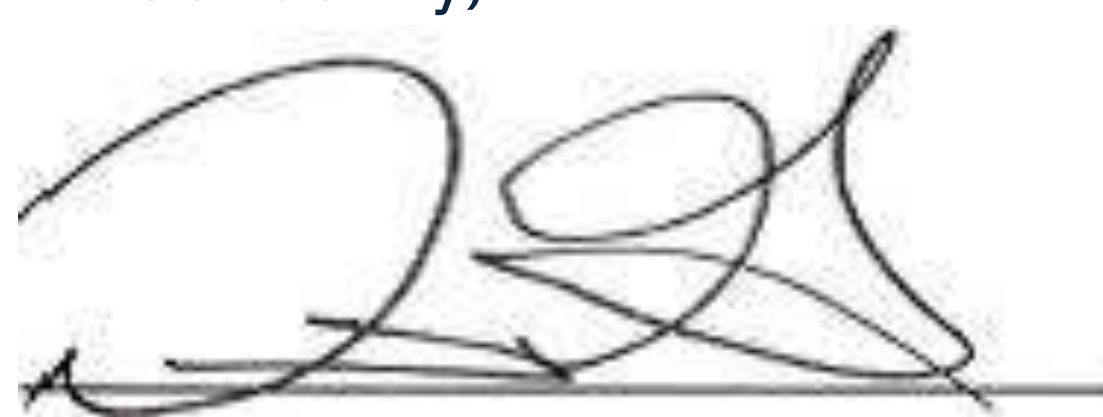
This round of Bargaining has been like no other, we are or have been dealing with two employers that are trying to take advantage of their employee's dedication and pride. In the 23 years that I have been an active union representative, I have never witnessed such disrespect in the workplace or at the bargaining table. We have roughly 40 active grievances, which the employer for the most part will force to arbitration. Myself and our National representative have communicated our concerns to the Superintendents which has seemed to have some positive effect. Please continue to view the CUPE local 218 website for updates.

On more of a happier note, we have been speaking with different individuals regarding CUPE Local 218 swag. I am excited about the new rollout of our new swag and I believe everyone will be quite pleased with the new designs. At the beginning of the rollout, we will be offering hoodies and T-shirts but we are open to any ideas or suggestions that one might have.

With the LINC ESL unit ratifying their new Collective Agreement, some changes have come to their bargaining team. I would like to take this opportunity to Congratulate both Sister Sajida Aaron in her new role as the Unit's Chairperson and Sister Katherine Sanchez was acclaimed as the Unit's Bargaining Representative. A sincere thank you to Sister Tracy Gill for her dedication and hard work as the Unit's Chairperson throughout their time working towards a Collective Agreement.

Our next General Membership Meeting will be held on Sunday March 28th 2021 at 7:00 pm

In Solidarity,



**Dennis Gibbs**  
President  
CUPE Local 218

March 2021

# Vice-President's Message

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**Dear Sisters and Brothers,**

Hello Everyone, we have made it to the month of March already. This year is sure flying by. Spring is on its way, days are getting longer and hopefully so are the nicer temperatures. I hope that everyone is doing well and that you are staying safe. We are hoping to see a light at the end of the tunnel for COVID, especially with the vaccines being brought in to our region now for the last month or more.

It has been a year since we started bargaining and we are still going. The negotiation are moving a little better for the DDSB as we are seeing some deals coming together now after we sent letters to the director. The DCDSB is moving a little slower and they had to do the same as the DDSB and a letter was sent to the director and the trustees for that board. We are hoping to get back to the tables for both board to get something resolved in the next couple of weeks.

We are still having issues with the DCDSB with using sick days while waiting for COVID test for either yourself or family member. We have filed several grievances for this situation and have been declined at Step 1 grievance but we are moving forward to step 2. We will be pressuring the DCDSB till we get results for your grievances. If this is happening to you please contact your committee to file a grievance for this issue. The DCDSB is taking advantage of our sick bank and this shouldn't be happening as we have a Quarantine article in our collective agreements.

If you have tested positive for COVID. Please remember to fill out a parklane with your administration which can be done through a phone call so that the school knows and the board knows that you have tested positive. This will also help you fall into the Quarantine article in our collective agreements. It will also be sent to the Labor board by the board to create a written occupational illness report under regulations 851 section 5.2. If you have tested positive for COVID please let your Union health and safety rep know so they can forward you the WSIB exposure forms for you to fill out.

Spring is almost here but we are still getting some winter conditions so please be careful when walking around the yard of school property because now there is going to be some thawing and freezing days out there. This is where we run in to slips, trips and fall season and no matter how hard our custodial staff work to keep things up to par whether it is inside or outside. We need to still need to take necessary precautions for your own personal safety. Make sure that you wear the proper footwear and proper clothing for these upcoming days of cold weather and snowy days.

Our Health and Safety teams have been working hard with the boards to make things safe over the last seven months. Unfortunately the boards have their own schedule but we are trying to keep on top of it to keep all of our members safe and protected. Thanks to the health and safety teams from both boards who have given a lot of extra time and dedication during these months for this pandemic.

If you have been injured at work or not at work and require you to be off work for anytime please reach out to the union office to find out what are your options. Even if you are not sure please give us a call to find out if there is anything that we can do for you and if you need to send us any medical information for your injuries and need time off to heal from those injuries then we can lead you in the right direction. Please reach out to us for any support.

Both the DCDSB and the DDSB have FEAP programs if you, or someone needs a little extra support. Most schools have information or posters with the number to call, or the contact information is on their websites. It is completely confidential.

Just a reminder to everyone that the General membership meeting will be held on Sunday, March 28/2021. Please make sure you plan to attend so you can be updated on what is going on with both boards.

**Sean Hebert**  
Vice President and Disability Rep  
Cupe 218  
[shebert@cupe218.ca](mailto:shebert@cupe218.ca)

# Disability Management

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Welcome to March. By the time you receive this Newsletter, we will be so close to our April break. I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe in this trying time.

As always, please ensure that if you have a workplace injury you contact the CUPE office so we can answer any questions or concerns you may have. We cannot stress enough the importance of filling out all the paperwork that is required and to also forward everything over to the CUPE office to assist you during this difficult process. When the CUPE office receives a notification of Occurrence regarding an injury in the workplace, you will receive a letter with a summary of the forms and the procedure that occurs. We understand that it may be a difficult time, but in order for us to support and ensure you have a safe return back to work, all documentation you send to the Board offices should be sent to the CUPE office as well. It is all confidential and only members of the Disability Team have access to it.

The DCDSB pays for any medical that is out of pocket. All receipts should be emailed to [Maureen.lecourt@dcdsb.ca](mailto:Maureen.lecourt@dcdsb.ca) or [confidential.medical@dcdsb.ca](mailto:confidential.medical@dcdsb.ca)

A new Memo went out regarding COVID and COVID symptoms in your household. If you are able to work from home while you are awaiting your COVID test results, please reach out to your principal for direction. Thank you as always for always doing your part to ensure the safety for all. As in my other reports I have included the basic protocol for COVID for each of the Boards.

For the DDSB, if you are exhibiting symptoms and are required to take a COVID test you are to notify your Supervisor and [shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca](mailto:shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca)

Once you are symptom free, you are to notify both the Board and Short term to inform them that you are symptom free and are able to work but cannot because you are still awaiting results of your COVID test. As long as your absence is because of COVID symptoms, you are not required to submit a doctor's note if you are off for 5 or more days.

It is also important for you to keep your Supervisor and Short term aware of your circumstances, this eases the transition when returning back to work and also ensures the correct coding is used for your absence.

For the DCDSB -If the online tool directs you to complete a COVID test you must log into your SFE and complete the absence with the appropriate drop-down box. We have had questions around the amount of time you can put in an absence at one time as the COVID centres are often telling members that results will take 5 days. As long as you are able to cancel your absence you can put more than one day. This will help offer consistency for your schools which will help our co-workers and the students. When you receive your COVID results you must submit them to [COVIDTestResults@dcdsb.ca](mailto:COVIDTestResults@dcdsb.ca). You can also go on the board website and access Memo HRS20-21010 for additional information and as mentioned above the new Memo HRS20-21049

## WSIB and Covid

If you believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19 while at work, but you are not ill and/or are not currently presenting symptoms of COVID-19, you should complete a [Worker's Exposure Incident Form](#) and fax it to the WSIB at: 1-888-313-7373 **AND report this to your Principal.**

If you are presenting symptoms of, and/or have been diagnosed with COVID-19, which you believe to be contracted at work, you should complete the above [form](#), notify the Board in the usual manner and seek medical advice immediately. Be sure to document for your records the date of your doctor or hospital visit. COVID-19 exists in the broader community, which creates challenges in establishing the link between your workplace and contracting the virus. For a COVID-19 claim to be allowed, evidence must show that a worker's risk of contracting the virus through their employment is greater than the risk to which the public at large is exposed, and that your work and/or workplace significantly contributed to the illness. You must also fill out a **WSIB form 6**, inform your Principal of this and send the completed form to Maureen Lecourt DCDSB at [confidential.medical@dcdsb.ca](mailto:confidential.medical@dcdsb.ca) or [shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca](mailto:shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca) at DDSB.

The Exposure form can be accessed through the WSIB website or the CUPE 218 website.

You can also contact the CUPE office if you cannot access online.

Both boards are currently sending out LTD packages by email. If you are from the DDSB, once the CUPE office is notified that you have received the LTD package, I will send you off a LTD letter that has some common information as well as give you a call. If you are from the DCDSB, the information that Rose Pearson sends off has a lot of information so I do not send you a letter, but I will call you to ensure that you have received the package. If you have any questions around the package or need anything printed off or sent off, please do not hesitate to contact the CUPE office for assistance.

If you have any questions or need assistance please feel free to call the CUPE Office, we would be more than happy to assist you. The Committee members can be reached through the CUPE Office: 905-571-7879 or Toll free 1-888-571-0218 Fax 905-571-4102

Stay safe!

**Carrie Boisvert** - [carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca](mailto:carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca)  
Disability Management Coordinator

**Sean Hebert** - [shebert@cupe218.ca](mailto:shebert@cupe218.ca)  
**Lori Richard** - [lrichards@cupe218.ca](mailto:lrichards@cupe218.ca)  
**Bobby Montgomery** - [bmontgomery@cupe218.ca](mailto:bmontgomery@cupe218.ca)

# Secretarial · Clerical · Technical Catholic Board

Well, it is official, we have been in a global pandemic for over a year. I think every single one of us needs to take a step back and look at everything the SCT group has accomplished in the past year. The schools have continued to function because of us, we have been supporting staff and students both at home and in our schools and offices, we have kept the administration of the board running, we have kept the buses moving and we have done it all as safely as it can be done given the ever-changing rules and guidelines. Our members have given and sacrificed so much of themselves in order to keep everything running smoothly. Congratulations to each and every one of you, you have all done an amazing job in extraordinary times.

I have had a lot of questions about the March 12th date. This is a board holiday for students only. We have always had to work this day or take a vacation day or even sometimes a Leave of absence.

I know some people have concerns about the face shields and my understanding is that the board is ordering some goggles so if you would prefer them please speak with your school principal.

If you have any questions or concerns about your health and safety at work, please first speak with your supervisor so that they are aware of the issue and have a chance to correct it. If that fails, please contact our SCT Health and Safety rep Alyssa King at [alyssa.king@cupe218.ca](mailto:alyssa.king@cupe218.ca). You can also contact me as well or call and leave a message at the CUPE 218 Office @ 905-571-7879.

I wish the update on bargaining was better but if you read the letter sent out from the president then you know we walked away from the table. This round of bargaining has been extraordinarily difficult with the employer and in CUPE we all stand together in solidarity. With the board refusing to move on concessions we felt we had no choice. A letter was sent to the director along with all the trustees and senior managers in the hopes that the director could intercede to try to get the employer back to the table without any concessions. Please keep checking your CUPE email as any important updates will be sent there.

We have had more grievance meetings with the employer around our existing leave of absence denial grievances, as well as sick days grievances about sick days being charged for days where an employee was required to be home due to a self-assessment or awaiting a COVID test result, where the employee would have gone to work in the past. We have not yet received the employer's response to these latest meetings yet. We have settled 3 grievances around denied vacation times.

Remember you need to do the COVID19 self-assessment (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>) every day. If the self-assessment advises you that you need a COVID19 test and you have to stay at home until you are cleared please let the union office know if you are deducted sick days from your bank. We are filing grievances on these for everyone that we know about as it is our position that sick days should not be deducted from our bank as it should fall under the quarantine language.

If you have any questions or concerns around the sick leave, quarantine, and disability please contact the CUPE 218 office and they can make sure to connect you with the appropriate person to help navigate the often-complicated paperwork.

Regarding Supervision... Every adult is responsible for the safety of every child but what we are not responsible for is supervision of students for prolonged periods of time. If you feel your school administrator is taking advantage of your presence in the office by having students sit there while the supervising staff is nowhere to be seen, first speak to the administrator and let them know it is not your responsibility to supervise students. If the situation continues, inform your Union Rep.

Make sure to be taking your breaks and lunches every single day. You deserve them and you have the right to them, it also never hurts to take them away from your desk for a little peace and quiet.

If injured on the job, please make sure you report it right away to your Principal and/or Supervisor. Make sure all paperwork is completed and copies are made for your own files. Please also let the Union Office ([office@cupe218.ca](mailto:office@cupe218.ca)) know that an incident has occurred and any updates following. We are here to assist you when required, however we can only do that when we are informed.

We have had a few virtual membership meetings over the last few months. I notice that a lot of SCT members still are not attending. Please try to make it, you have a chance to ask questions and hear how things are going with everyone. The next date will be included with this newsletter when you receive it. If you need help accessing your CUPE email, please contact Sue Wilkinson at the CUPE 218 office.

See you next newsletter.

**Mike Morris**  
Chairperson  
[mmorris@cupe218.ca](mailto:mmorris@cupe218.ca)

**Sandra Ribeiro-Dantas**  
Bargaining Committee  
[sandra.dantas@cupe218.ca](mailto:sandra.dantas@cupe218.ca)

**Jennifer Del Gatto**  
Bargaining Committee  
[jennifer.delgatto@cupe218.ca](mailto:jennifer.delgatto@cupe218.ca)

# Office · Clerical · Technical Public Board

I have to say I am so looking forward to my “April Break”: five glorious days of not wearing a mask for 7 hours each day, no alarm clocks, and fingers crossed for some warm weather! For those of you who do not get this break, I trust you will enjoy some mask/alarm clock-free time also as your schedule permits.

## Personal Time

Several secretaries have mentioned that they are being contacted by their admin to complete tasks outside of their working hours. If this is true for you, you have a few options.

1. Let your admin know that you will complete the task the following day when you are back in the office.
2. Make arrangements to be compensated for your time.
3. Don't answer your phone/text. It's your phone on your time, you can choose who you answer or don't answer.

This is not meant as a punitive measure, instead we all need to prioritize and protect our personal time.

## Board Approved PPE

We are all required to wear board approved PPE in the workplace. Many members are having difficulties with the board provided shields and/or goggles and have purchased their own. Please know that all PPE must be approved by the board prior to being worn in the workplace. If you have any questions about a particular product, you can contact Kerri Stewart at DDSB to verify it meets the board's standards.

## COVID Symptoms

The Durham Region Health Department has updated Covid-19 protocols to include all members of a household of a symptomatic individual must self-isolate until the said individual meets criteria for returning to work/school. Please follow the information as outlined in the Disability Management page.

## OCT Committee Contact Information

OCT Chairperson	Allison Petty	<a href="mailto:allison.petty@cupe218.ca">allison.petty@cupe218.ca</a>
Elementary Schools Rep	Leanne Finlay	<a href="mailto:leanne.finlay@cupe218.ca">leanne.finlay@cupe218.ca</a>
Secondary Schools Rep	Antony Nembhard	<a href="mailto:antony.nembhard@cupe218.ca">antony.nembhard@cupe218.ca</a>
Education Centre Rep	Andrew Pearce	<a href="mailto:andrew.pearce@cupe218.ca">andrew.pearce@cupe218.ca</a>

# Custodial · Maintenance Public Board

Dear Brothers and sisters,

By the time you are reading this we will be in the process of ratifying our tentative collective agreement. I would like to thank the committee for the hard work they have put in over this lengthy period of bargaining. I as well as the committee were adamant that there would be no concessions in which the board had tabled many. I would also like to thank our national servicing Rep. for the hard work that she put forward in helping custodial/maintenance reach this agreement. Comment was made that in her over thirty years of bargaining collective agreements, she has never dealt with a more difficult employer. This will be my second agreement that I have been on the bargaining team and to say that it was a difficult round of negotiations would be putting it lightly. Between bargaining over zoom due to COVID and that multiple concessions that were tabled by the employer, I am glad to say that our tem stayed strong and did not give up. Again we would like to thank all of our members for their patience over the last year.

Due to COVID, timelines for grievances were suspended. The union and the board had agreed that due to the difficulty in setting up meetings for the many grievances that the union has filed, extensions would be given before grievances proceeded to the next step. The union has now put the board on notice that it will be resuming normal timelines as per the C/A. That being said during the month of March we are hoping to have resolutions to the majority of them.

The Custodial /Maintenance committee is continuing to work and with the help of Brother Dan Mills, our Health and Safety representative we have been working on the unfair workload that the DDSB has delegated to their employees. We find it disheartening that the employer has no problem putting a workload on their employee that could cause them possible injury or have them work at a pace that could be unsafe. On a daily basis the members of the Custodial/ Maintenance unit go above and beyond achieving unbelievable quantities of work with no appreciation. It is a proven fact that ALL members of CUPE local 218 take pride in the quality of work that they provide, it is disrespectful and shameful that they are taken advantage of. You might be contacted by a member of the committee requesting some information regarding your workplace. PLEASE remember not to

start before your scheduled shift and not to stay after the end of your shift, take all breaks and work at a safe pace. If there are duties that you were not able to complete please contact your Chief and or Supervisor to make them aware. Just doing these few things that are your right will help to properly schedule the number of working hours that are needed.

The Board has introduced a new chemical that replaces the current ES 65. We have received several complaints from members across all units that since the introduction of the new disinfectant, members have shown symptoms that it can be a major irritant and have even had to seek medical attention. If you are experiencing any reactions to the new chemical please inform your supervisor immediately. Brother Dan Mills is looking into these cases to determine if there is any connection between these reactions and the new chemical.

**During These difficult times, dealing with COVID and the winter blues. Stress can become a major issue for our members.**

#### **Effects of uncontrolled stress**

Work-related stress doesn't just disappear when you head home for the day. When stress persists, it can take a toll on your health and well-being.

A stressful work environment can contribute to problems such as headache, stomach ache, sleep disturbances, short temper, and difficulty concentrating. Chronic stress can result in anxiety, insomnia, high blood pressure, and a weakened immune system. It can also contribute to health conditions such as depression, obesity, and heart disease. Compounding the problem, people who experience excessive stress often deal with it in unhealthy ways, such as overeating, eating unhealthy foods, smoking cigarettes, or abusing drugs and alcohol.



# Custodial · Maintenance Public Board

## Taking steps to manage stress

**Track your stressors.** Keep a journal for a week or two to identify which situations create the most stress and how you respond to them. Record your thoughts, feelings, and information about the environment, including the people and circumstances involved, the physical setting, and how you reacted. Did you raise your voice? Get a snack from the vending machine? Go for a walk? Taking notes can help you find patterns among your stressors and your reactions to them.

**Develop healthy responses.** Instead of attempting to fight stress with fast food or alcohol, do your best to make healthy choices when you feel the tension rise. Exercise is a great stress-buster. Yoga can be an excellent choice, but any form of physical activity is beneficial. Also make time for hobbies and favorite activities. Whether it's reading a novel, going to concerts, or playing games with your family, make sure to set aside time for the things that bring you pleasure. Getting enough good-quality sleep is also important for effective stress management. Build healthy sleep habits by limiting your caffeine intake late in the day and minimizing stimulating activities, such as computer and television use, at night.

**Establish boundaries.** In today's digital world, it's easy to feel pressure to be available 24 hours a day. Establish some work-life boundaries for yourself. That might mean making a rule not to check email from home in the evening, or not answering the phone during dinner. Although people have different preferences when it comes to how much they blend their work and home life, creating some clear boundaries between these realms can reduce the potential for work-life conflict and the stress that goes with it.

**Take time to recharge.** To avoid the negative effects of chronic stress and burnout, we need time to replenish and return to our pre-stress level of functioning. This recovery process requires "switching off" from work by having periods of time when you are neither engaging in work-related activities, nor thinking about work. That's why it's critical that you disconnect from time to time, in a way that fits your needs and preferences. Don't let your vacation days go to waste. When possible, take time off to relax and unwind, so you come back to work feeling reinvigorated and ready to perform at your best. When you're not able to take time off, get a quick boost by turning off your smartphone and focusing your attention on nonwork activities for a while.

**Learn how to relax.** Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, and mindfulness (a state in which you actively observe present experiences and thoughts without judging them) can help melt away stress. Start by taking a few minutes each day to focus on a

simple activity like breathing, walking, or enjoying a meal. The skill of being able to focus purposefully on a single activity without distraction will get stronger with practice and you'll find that you can apply it to many different aspects of your life.

**Talk to your supervisor.** Employee health has been linked to productivity at work, so your boss has an incentive to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being. Start by having an open conversation with your supervisor. The purpose of this isn't to lay out a list of complaints, but rather to come up with an effective plan for managing the stressors you've identified, so you can perform at your best on the job. While some parts of the plan may be designed to help you improve your skills in areas such as time management, other elements might include identifying employer-sponsored wellness resources you can tap into, clarifying what's expected of you, getting necessary resources or support from colleagues, enriching your job to include more challenging or meaningful tasks, or making changes to your physical workspace to make it more comfortable and reduce strain.

**Get some support.** Accepting help from trusted friends and family members can improve your ability to manage stress. Your employer may also have stress management resources available through an employee assistance program, including online information, available counselling, and referral to mental health professionals, if needed. If you continue to feel overwhelmed by work stress, you may want to talk to a psychologist, who can help you better manage stress and change unhealthy behaviour.

**Please remember that if you have the unfortunate experience of a work-related injury to please report it to your Supervisor and to Carrie Boisvert, our Disability Coordinator at the Union Office, Also, if you submit medical to the Employer, PLEASE make sure Carrie or I receive a copy as well. No injury is too small to report.**

In Solidarity,

**Bob Montgomery**  
Chairperson/Disability Representative

Bargaining Committee  
**John Allan**  
**Kurt Badgley**  
**Dan Mills**  
**Dan Fusco**

Stewards  
**Kevin Lamont**  
**Jeff Goodwin**  
**Robin Fair**  
**Jess Fusco**

# Custodial · Maintenance Public Board · Health & Safety

## Stand up for Our Health and Safety

Hello to everyone and by the time you read this hopefully we will be enjoying milder temperatures and no snow or the associated mess that comes with it.

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since the pandemic started but it does look like we are at least heading in the right direction and making it through the issues diligently and I thank you all for the understanding when it comes to dealing with the issues that have been created due to the ongoing changes.

By now most schools should be switched over to the new ES364 and I ask that is you have or are experiencing any issues to address them with your supervisor and document them. I still recommend that you wear a mask when dispensing just for the scent alone. I also ask that you make sure your tub rooms have proper ventilation. If you experience any affect be sure to fill out an exposure form.

With the new protocols from the Durham Health Unit there has been as lot of concerns with what is required PPE and that fact that what is supplied can't be worn by many due to many different reasons. Custodial Maintenance staff are required to have safety glasses or form of eye protection in their possession always in case they do encounter co- horts/ groups. We are seeing more of the foreign produced PPE and if you experience issues with again inform your supervisor and document and if required a possible exposure form.

Now that spring is starting so does the duties of the clean up from all the melting snow and the many objects and items that where hidden within. Please remember to wear the proper PPE (heavy work gloves) when doing this task and watch for sharps that can be embedded with the refuse left behind. This time of year, roof top work comes back into our duties more regularly with this comes measures that need to be followed for your safety and your co-workers they are as follows.

1. IF you are not trained you should not be doing the work.
2. Always stay 2 meters or 6 feet from the edge
3. This type of work should not be done alone make sure you have communication (two-way radio) as well
4. Make sure main office is aware that you are going onto the roof
5. Inspection of ladders and hatches to ensure they are in in good condition. If issues have been reported and not fixed don't use until they are tag out and follow up with your supervisor
6. Have a plan prior to (weather) and an exit plan also follow any procedure that pertain to the work you are doing.
7. Be aware of the surrounds but also of one self. If you are not comfortable or do not feel safe communicate that with your custodial supervisor.

I also ask when you have the time if you could please let me know if you are trained and when it expires as the employer has been unwilling to share that information with myself.

I had mention that you follow any protocols that are in place. A note on this, Chief custodians, or Building operators are not supervisors. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure training is done. You can do your due diligence by checking and taking it forward from there.

One last topic is site inspections (workplace inspections) as you are aware we do theses twice a year and it is one of our rights "to participate" and have a voice. I am hoping that going forward I can hear more from you about the actual procedure good and bad and if you have received the training. If you have concerns due to the time it takes to do the inspection you can have a say when it is completed and can request that your night staff come in and cover your section (afternoon) so that you can focus on the actual inspection.

Well know that I have bored you all to sleep I again say way to go you all are doing an amazing job under these trying times and keeping our building safe for all staff and students.

Be safe and remember to put your safety both mental and physical first work within our negotiated hours and take you proper breaks.

If any questions or concerns please contact me at:  
[daniel.mills@cupe218.ca](mailto:daniel.mills@cupe218.ca) or (905) 571-7879

“See You Along The Path “

### Dan Mills

Custodial Maintenance  
Certified Health and Safety  
Representative and Facilitator

# Custodial · Maintenance Catholic Board

I hope this Newsletter finds everyone well and staying safe. It has been a year now since we have been dealing with this COVID 19 pandemic. Collectively we have been through a lot with all the closures and re-openings, social and physical distancing and basically placing all of our lives on hold. Fear not as the end is actually in sight and before we know it we will actually be able to spend time with our loved ones and friends... in person.

As we aren't out of the COVID woods yet we are still performing enhanced cleaning in our schools and buildings therefore the Enhanced Cleaning document is still in effect. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please don't hesitate to contact Sean Hebert, Jerry Hanley or myself.

A step 2 grievance was recently presented to the board and we are awaiting their reply as well as a Step 1, which we also await their reply.

Please refer to your CUPE email for any updates or new information. If you do not have access to your CUPE 218 email, please be sure to contact Sue Wilkinson at the union office ([swilkinson@cupe218.ca](mailto:swilkinson@cupe218.ca)) for your login information; this information will give you access to both your email and the members' area of our website. We encourage you to log in so that you have access to the latest updates concerning your union. Please also keep in mind that if you have been injured on or off the job, it is important to keep the union office informed.

Please remember to keep a close watch on your PPE inventory. If your school needs PPE supplies and your monthly delivery isn't enough then place a work order in EBASE under "Shipping/Receiving" for extra supplies. This pertains to soap, hand sanitizer, masks, face shields and gloves. Disinfectant and regular cleaning supplies still go through SWISH. Try to avoid waiting until the last possible minute and running out. Also remember to keep your face masks on at all times except for eating and drinking as it is possible that you may be reported. If you cannot maintain a 2m distance from students or other staff you must wear a face shield as well as your mask. All schools should be receiving MERV 13 filters to be installed in the Air Handling Units, this roll out is expected by the end of March. If you have any questions regarding this please contact your SQS.

Please feel free to contact one of your reps listed below if you have any questions or concerns. We will do our best to provide the answers and/or support that is required. It would be great to see more custodian and maintenance personnel out to meetings or via ZOOM to hear what is happening with our union and school boards.

On a personal note I would just like to thank all of our custodial and Maintenance staff for their hard work and dedication to our fellow staff, students and buildings. Our professionalism and continued dedication makes me proud to be able to be your CUPE Rep.

In Solidarity,

**Dave Slater** – Chair C/M [dslater@cupe218.ca](mailto:dslater@cupe218.ca)

**Natalie Melich** – Bargaining [nmelich@cupe218.ca](mailto:nmelich@cupe218.ca)

**Eric Publow** – Bargaining [eric.publow@cupe218.ca](mailto:eric.publow@cupe218.ca)

**John Quarrie** – Steward [john.quarrie@cupe218.ca](mailto:john.quarrie@cupe218.ca)

March 2021

# Educational Assistants Public Board

**Thank you!** In case no one has told you lately..... you are doing a fantastic job! Yes it can be scary and there are uncertainties with many hiccups along the way but be very proud of yourselves and the work you are doing for the students. You may be the one who is making the difference in their lives. If you receive a smile, it's because of you! You made them happy!

**Bargaining update** – We are still involved in the Conciliation process as of the writing of this newsletter.

**Seniority List** – will be out for March 31st. There will be a copy posted on the CUPE 218 website in the Portal.

**Staffing & Transfer letter** – HR will be sending all permanent EAs the yearly Request for Transfer email early April. Please remember that once you put your name forth, you are giving up the position you currently hold. At this time we have no further information on any changes with schools/classes or positions. We will send out info as we receive it.

**Collective Agreement** – This can be found both on the DDSB website and our CUPE website in the member's portal. Please either download it or print a copy out for yourself. You will find all of the info in regards to many questions – sick leave, bereavement days, special leave days (such as graduation and moving days), supervision etc. It really is a valuable piece of information in regards to your work, duties and responsibilities.

**VIRTUAL REMINDER** – when on any meet with students, always make sure that someone else is there and available. Whether it's a teacher, SERT, Admin or another EA. You should not meet students alone, there has to be someone else on the meet as well. **They don't have to be on screen but have to be listening.** This protects all from any issues with students, parents etc. Also remember that you can always remove a student or shut down the meet quickly if anything happens. Contact Admin right away if there are any problems. If you feel unsafe at all, you need to speak with the Admin and have a plan put in place for your safety.

\*\*\*This information was agreed upon between the Union and ISS (Inclusive Student Services) \*\*\*

**SCREEN TIME** – working virtually now is not like it was in the spring. In order to stay working with no layoffs, everyone has to work their full hours. Therefore, in working virtually, that could mean that you are on the computer with students for the entire work day. Minus your lunch and breaks.

**SOCIAL MEDIA** – We can't stress this enough, please, stay off any social media sites when you are to be working with students! Also, be careful on what you post or say. As we've said many times, the board always seems to find out! This

can and has led to discipline. The Union has a very hard time arguing this as it's considered 'Theft of Time'.

**Supervision/Roles** – there have been a number of questions in regards to EAs being left alone with students. The first thing to remember is.... We are not teachers. We are not responsible for the management of a classroom or the teaching of a class. Under the Education Act, this is a teacher's role. We only work with identified students and implement what a teacher has taught the students and work that has been provided to us to support the students. We DO NOT program for students, this as well is a teacher's role. We are able to supervise students for short periods on our own but for any length of time, there needs to be a teacher or Admin in charge. It would be case by case, based on the situation. Think of the timeframe and if being on your own with students could create a H&S risk for either you or you and the students. Contact Admin and ask for assistance.

We go to separate rooms to work with students, we go to the calming/quiet room etc. Is there a plan in place for that? Do you have a walkie talkie, are you stationed by the door or in the hall? Is the door left open? You need to speak with your Admin and have a plan in place for your safety. If you feel unsafe at all, you need to contact your Admin.

Look at the Collective Agreement – Articles L23.08 and L23.09. You'll find info on supervision here. As well, Article L23.10 explains Redeployment within a School.

**Disability Management items** – if you are going to be off for a length of time, you need to let your Admin know and add that you have notified Short Term Absence and will be or have provided them with a Dr's note. You should never give Admin any of your confidential medical notes or information.

When providing Short Term Absence with your information, [shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca](mailto:shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca) and it's a good idea to either copy in the Union Disability Coordinator, [carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca](mailto:carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca) or send us whatever you send the Board. This helps us better support you in any way required.

\*\*\*Important Reminder\*\*\*those who have 'Permanent Limitations and Restrictions' are required to provide yearly updates from a Specialist every April/May. This helps make sure that your permanent accommodations are being met. If there are Admin changes or you move schools, this plan makes sure all are aware of these accommodations.

Look for something positive in each day, even if some days you have to look a little harder. Take care of your health and wellness.

In Solidarity,

Stewards - **Stephanie Dezsi, Fil Wylie, Deb Kennelly, Brandy Townson,**  
Reps - **Glen Morrison, Tracey Lesperance, Sue Wilkinson and Lori Richards**

See Area Chart on the Next Page...

# Educational Assistants Public Board

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE CONTACT THE REP/STEWARD FOR THE AREA IN WHICH THE SCHOOL YOU WORK IN IS LOCATED.**

**Public Board EA Area and Contact** – Please contact the Rep or Steward for your Area School via your CUPE email address. We are not to use the DDSB email for any Union business.

SCHOOL AREA	CONTACT PERSON (REP)	CONTACT INFO
AJAX & PICKERING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	<b>BRANDY TOWNSON (STEWARD)</b>  <b>STEPHANIE DEZSI (STEWARD)</b>	<a href="mailto:brandy.townson@cupe218.ca">brandy.townson@cupe218.ca</a>  <a href="mailto:stephanie.dezsi@cupe218.ca">stephanie.dezsi@cupe218.ca</a>
ALL NORTHERN & WHITBY–ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	<b>DEB KENNELLY (STEWARD)</b>	<a href="mailto:deborah.kennelly@cupe218.ca">deborah.kennelly@cupe218.ca</a>
OSHAWA ELEMENTARY (ADELAIDE MCLAUGHLIN P.S.– JEANNE SAUVE P.S.)  OSHAWA ELEMENTARY (KEDRON P.S. – WOODCREST P.S.)	<b>FIL WYLIE (STEWARD)</b>  <b>SUE WILKINSON (REP AND CONTACT FOR CUPE EMAIL, BENEFITS AND OTIP)</b>	<a href="mailto:filomena.wylie@cupe218.ca">filomena.wylie@cupe218.ca</a>  <a href="mailto:swilkinson@cupe218.ca">swilkinson@cupe218.ca</a>
ALL HIGH SCHOOLS & H&S ITEMS	<b>TRACEY LESPERANCE (REP AND EA H&amp;S REP)</b>	<a href="mailto:tracey.lesperance@cupe218.ca">tracey.lesperance@cupe218.ca</a>
BOARD MEETINGS AND CUPE EA COLLABORATOR	<b>GLEN MORRISON (REP)</b>	<a href="mailto:gmorrison@cupe218.ca">gmorrison@cupe218.ca</a>
SUPPLIES -OFFICE /OUTDOOR ED/ DISABILITY MANAGEMENT REP	<b>LORI RICHARDS (CHAIRPERSON)</b>	<a href="mailto:lrichards@cupe218.ca">lrichards@cupe218.ca</a>

# Educational Assistants Public Board · Health & Safety

## Updates

### Covid Prevention Refresher video

There is a Covid Prevention Refresher video that can be found on the DDSB Professional Learning Hub.

### DDSB COVID-19 PPE Resource

The DDSB COVID-19 PPE Resource is now available. The resource covers COVID-19 PPE requirements, expectations (both in general and for specific tasks), care and use of PPE, etc. This can be found on the new COVID-19 page on DDSB Spark. <https://spark.ddsb.ca/en/administrative-and-school-services/resources/Documents/HealthandSafety/COVID-Resources/DDSB-Covid-PPE-Resource-Feb-23.pdf>

### H&S COVID-19 SPARK Page

There is a new COVID-19 page on DDSB Spark that has all relevant resources, training modules, links, posters, etc. This can be found on the Health, Safety, and Risk Management tab.

<https://spark.ddsb.ca/en/administrative-and-school-services/covid-resources.aspx>

## Eye Protection

All DDSB employees are required to wear board-approved eye protection whenever they are interacting with students or others (occupied classroom or when walking through the hallway in an occupied building).

There are a few different options (visor, goggles or safety glasses) You have the option to wear the ones that you are most comfortable in and allow you to do your job. If you are working with a student and maybe exposed to spitting, you should wear the goggles as they offer the best protection as they are sealed to the face.

Let your Administration know if you require the safety glasses that fit over prescription glasses as they need to be ordered separately.

**Reminder - you are to wear only the PPE that has been provided by the board.** This is for your safety and to ensure that you will be covered by WSIB should there be any health issues in the future.

Should you be experiencing health issues due to the provided PPE you should send an email to [shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca](mailto:shortterm.absence@ddsb.ca) and the CUPE Disability Coordinator, [carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca](mailto:carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca) and be sure to c.c both myself and Lori Ann.

## Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls are one of the most common injuries to Educational Assistants.

Studies show that good housekeeping, quality of walking surfaces (flooring), selection of proper footwear, and appropriate pace of walking are critical for preventing fall incidents.

Good housekeeping is the first and the most important (fundamental) level of preventing falls due to slips and trips.

- Cleaning all spills immediately
- Removing obstacles from walkways and always keeping walkways free of clutter
- Making sure that things you are carrying or pushing do not prevent you from seeing any obstructions, spills, etc.
- Adjusting your stride to a pace that is suitable for the walking surface and the tasks you are doing
- Taking your time and paying attention to where you are going
- Choose appropriate footwear for the job
- Flat-low helped shoes, treaded soles for uneven, wet or snow covered surfaces
- Winter traction aids for slippery conditions can be requested from you Admin.

If you have any questions or concerns with regards to the above information you can contact me at [tracey.lesperance@cupe218.ca](mailto:tracey.lesperance@cupe218.ca) or call the union office 905-571-7879.

### Tracey Lesperance

EA Health and Safety Representative

# Educational Assistants Catholic Board

I am so happy that I can say welcome to perhaps an early spring! The temperatures are still going to fluctuate but we are moving into warmer weather which should give us a chance to spend more time outdoors. I hate my house right now as I am sure you all do as well. The days are getting longer giving us more daylight and that in itself is lifting my spirits. Remember that the clocks spring forward on Sunday, March 14th @ 2 am, so don't forget to change your fire alarm batteries. I do know I had a countdown to "March Break," only to find out that it is now "April Break." That took the wind out of my sails, so I'm just managing on a day-by-day basis as I am sure you all are as well. I want to say that all of you have worked so hard at staying safe in order to assist our special needs students under a tremendous amount of stress and worry about the variant COVID spread. We've all got this!

We have had a number of issues with the use of shields, and/or the goggles. Either the students rip off the shields, or they fog up, or they provide a lot of glare and a lot of EAs have complained of headaches. The goggles (deep sea diving) do smell and also cause me to overheat. I had a horrendous day when I tried to train Read & Write to two whole classes. I admit to feeling extremely overheated, so much so that I had to lift the shield away from my face. The good news is that "facilities," had me trial a new pair of goggles while training a couple of glasses and they worked very well. They fit comfortably over my glasses, I was able to my computer screen as there wasn't a glare, and they

didn't seem to fog up and I didn't over heat. I wore them for a number of days, and submitted an evaluation. The board has now ordered 2500 pairs so that all staff will be provided with these goggles. Be patient! We have to continue to wear what we have both inside and outside when we can't maintain a 2m distance. Hang in there!



**My new DCDSB fashion statement!**

# Educational Assistants Catholic Board

## Health & Safety & Carrie Boisvert – CUPE Disability Coordinator

Reminder when you are filling out the Online Incident Reports you are checking off Student and not employee. You are writing the incident report because of an incident with a STUDENT. If you had to write a report because of an incident with a co-worker, you would check off employee.

There have been many questions around COVID -19. The Board put out another memo surrounding if you have a family member that is exhibiting symptoms. Please review the memo and if you are home awaiting a COVID test or results let your supervisor know you are able to work from home. If you have any questions surrounding online incident reporting or COVID -19 protocol, please give me a call at the CUPE office.

Stay safe and as always thanks for always going above and beyond for our students.

## A message from Susie Lee-Fenandez – Superintendent of Student Services

*Dear Educational Assistants,*

*I cannot believe how fast the time is going, even though I know that the days can be long and very busy. I hope you and your families are all doing well.*

*During this time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, I am thinking of you and the essential support you provide in our schools. Each one of you makes a significant impact and difference for the students you serve. I hope that you are all taking time to practice good self-care, both physically and mentally. The weather is warming up and I am hopeful that the change of season will bring a new strength, hope and positivity.*

*Take care,*

*Susie*

## Labour Management

Our next Labour Management meeting is not until May 14, 2021. We are still hoping to get responses from the Board regarding our requests at the last LMM.

## AD HOC

Our next AD HOC meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2021

## Grievances

We had a Step 1 and Step II regarding our “Quarantine” language and the board’s policy of docking days from our sick bank, as well as an LTO discipline without union representation. We believe that these grievances will continue through the process as so far, they’ve been denied from the Board. We still have not received a response to the Step III “Policy grievance.”

## Bargaining

At the time of this writing there has been some movement on the Board’s part thanks to our National Representative and her expertise, Linda Merkac. I’m hoping that by the time you all are reading this, that we will be ratifying an agreement. Whoo hoo! It’s been a long road but we got there!

Don’t lose hope! We will come out of this time with an appreciation for the little things in life. Stay the course. You’ve got this!



Remember we are here if you need us.

**Maureen Cope** - [maureen.cope@cupe218.ca](mailto:maureen.cope@cupe218.ca)

Bargaining Chair, Catholic Board  
Educational Assistants

## Bargaining Committee

**Carrie Boisvert** - Health & Safety Representative  
[carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca](mailto:carrie.boisvert@cupe218.ca)

**Bobbi Jo Agius** - [bobbijo.agius@cupe218.ca](mailto:bobbijo.agius@cupe218.ca)

Steward

**Shelagh Cauchi** - [shelagh.cauchi@cupe218.ca](mailto:shelagh.cauchi@cupe218.ca)

## Just a reminder!

Keep in mind that if we don’t return your call right away it is because we are also working and are not allowed to conduct union business while working.



March 2021

# LINC · ESL

## Catholic Board

My name is Sajida Aaron and I am the new Chairperson for the LINC/ESL Instructors from DCDSB. I would like to thank everyone for their support in electing me.

I am grateful for your trust and belief in me to carry out this position. Katherine, who is also on our Bargaining Committee, is super excited to work together with me. Also, I would like to thank and acknowledge, Tracy Gill for her hard work, leadership, and dedication in achieving our first ratification.

In the upcoming weeks, please check your emails at the CUPE local 218 website and the School Board for information regarding your benefits.

Please contact Katherine or me if you have any questions or concerns. We will do our best to provide the answers and/or support that is required.

Take Care and Stay Safe!

In Solidarity,

**Sajida Aaron**

Bargaining Chair, DCDSB

Your Bargaining Committee:

Sajida Aaron – [sajida.aaron@cupe218.ca](mailto:sajida.aaron@cupe218.ca)

Katherine Sanchez - [katherine.sanchez@cupe218.ca](mailto:katherine.sanchez@cupe218.ca)

# Continuing Education Public Board

Our main update this month is regarding bargaining. Our last contract ended almost 18 months ago, and it has been over a year since we began negotiating with the Board. We had two final bargaining days on January 26 and February 10 with the Board and a conciliator, and the remaining issues were resolved on the final date. The next step is ratification by both you (CUPE members) and the employer (DDSB). The timing of the presentation of the agreement for review and ratification depends on when all the other units complete their bargaining process.

Throughout the lengthy process, we were thankful for the support of the other bargaining unit chairs and committee members. There were a number of common language articles that we worked on together and were able to achieve because the other units stood by us in solidarity. As the newest unit, developing a wide-ranging Collective Agreement takes time, especially when dealing with a somewhat intransigent employer. Our thanks go to Dennis, Sean and all the other bargaining committee members for their support.

We have also been waiting a long time for the completion of the job evaluation process. How long? We have bargaining notes regarding JE discussions with the Board dating back to 2013, and e-mail threads going back to early 2018. Some of these communications were with Board HR employees who are not even there any more! So, yes, we understand the impatience that some of you have expressed. As far as an update goes, my understanding is that there will be a separate JE update from Sharon Munro, JE committee co-chair, included in this newsletter.

Please feel free to contact Jane, Darlene or Judy if you need help at any time. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our next general membership meeting to be held virtually on March 28, 2021.

## **Jane Batterink**

Bargaining Chair, Continuing Education  
Public Board

March 2021

# Job Evaluation Public Board

## Public Board Job Evaluation Committee Update

Hello all,

The J/E committee has 2 full days booked on March 16th and 17th to continue to work on outstanding job evaluation requests. We will be working on the EA submission on those dates. We expect it will take both days to complete. We will be booking future dates to work towards clearing all outstanding requests before the end of this school year.

Thank you all for your patience.

Take care,

**Sharon Munro**

Co-Chair – Job Evaluation Committee

# OTIP Updates

## Buying a car? Why your insurance provider should be the first person you tell

Whether you are driving a shiny new car off the lot or found a used car in good shape on an auto buy-and-sell page, you'll need to notify your insurer before you write the cheque. The make, model and year of your vehicle are key factors in determining your auto insurance policy premiums and ensuring that you have the right amount of coverage in place. That's why it's so important to contact your insurance provider before you purchase a new vehicle. Depending on the make, model and year of your new vehicle, keeping your insurer updated could save you on your insurance premiums.

Learn more at [www.otipinsurance.com/article102](http://www.otipinsurance.com/article102).



## How a dash cam can help you save on car insurance

Are you among the one in ten Canadian drivers who has a dash cam installed in their car? As car safety technology continues to advance and more gadgets become available, dash cams are becoming an increasingly popular topic of conversation. With the average retail price upwards of \$100, many drivers are wondering if installing a dash cam is worth it.

Learn more at [www.otipinsurance.com/article103](http://www.otipinsurance.com/article103).



# Membership Discounts



## Edvantage Card

Your Edvantage Card gives you special access to discounts on things like car insurance, Canada's Wonderland passes, GoodLife memberships, retail purchases and more!

Don't have an Edvantage Card?

Contact Sue Wilkinson at [swilkinson@cupe218.ca](mailto:swilkinson@cupe218.ca) to request yours today!



## Oshawa Tribute Centre

As a CUPE 218 member, you can get exclusive discounts for events at the Oshawa Tribute Centre! Visit the Members' Portal to take advantage of the discounts available to members.

Don't have a CUPE 218 Members' Portal account? Contact Sue Wilkinson at [swilkinson@cupe218.ca](mailto:swilkinson@cupe218.ca) to gain access.