

November 3, 2022

To: Ontario Unifor local unions in the education sector

Greetings,

As you know, employees of many school boards across Ontario are at a crucial stage in their fight with the Ontario Government. Instead of bargaining in good faith, the Government is attempting to impose a new collective agreement on all of the CUPE-represented employees using Bill 28. That Bill, if passed, will strip CUPE members of their ability to bargain with their school board employers. It will prohibit strikes and impose huge financial penalties on CUPE and its members. It is clearly a law that violates the Charter of Rights. It relies on the “notwithstanding clause” in the Charter to impose what is undoubtedly an unconstitutional law.

Unifor supports CUPE in its struggle. CUPE’s bargaining directly affects 800 Unifor members at four school boards. Our members work side by side with CUPE members every day at some of those Boards.

We will confront this unjust government action directly. We understand that CUPE is rallying at central locations on Friday. We encourage our school board members to join those rallies.

Even if there is not a physical picket line by CUPE members at the schools at which Unifor members also work, we will act as if a picket line is in place. It is unconscionable that Unifor members would be compelled to cross a picket line during this unprecedented assault on collective bargaining rights. We will be respecting those picket lines and calling for a fair deal for all school board workers across Ontario.

Unifor is prepared to support any member who chooses not to attend work on Friday November 4 in solidarity with CUPE’s resistance to this outrageous government action. Unifor will support any member in a workplace where CUPE members are also present who would lose a day’s pay, or face discipline from their employer, for failing to report to work on Friday. In such cases, we ask that local unions direct members to their national representative for support.

More communication will follow regarding picket support and solidarity actions for next week.

We ask that local unions share this communication with members in workplace where CUPE members are also present.

We also encourage all members to show Unifor solidarity on picket lines and rally locations across the province. Picket locator and other resources are available on the [Unifor website](#).

In solidarity,

Three handwritten signatures in black ink. From left to right: Lana Payne, Len Poirier, and Naureen Rizvi. The signatures are fluid and cursive.

LANA PAYNE, National President
LEN POIRIER, National Secretary-Treasurer
NAUREEN RIZVI, Ontario Regional Director

LP/LP/NR/bmkcope343

cc Roxanne Dubois, Kelly-Anne Orr, Pearl Almeida, Jake Moore, Andy Savela, Gary Bragnalo, Dawn Leroux, Michelle Arruda, Jan Romo, Kat Leonard, Christine Connor, Mina Sarajcic, DJ Lacey, Jim Woods, Kathleen O'Keefe, Sarah McCue, Anthony Dale