

MANITOBA REGIONAL OFFICE

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SENT VIA EMAIL: minedu@leg.gov.mb.ca

April 1, 2020

Honourable Kelvin Goertzen
Minister of Education
Room 168 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8

Dear Minister,

RE: INDEFINITE SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

We are writing to you to urge School Divisions to keep education support staff on the payroll for the rest of the school year. Education Assistants and other staff have developed important relationships with students, and there is so much work that needs to be done to support those children and their families who may not be familiar with instruction from home.

As the union that represents approximately 5,000 support staff in twenty-four school divisions across Manitoba, CUPE is ready to work with school divisions to be flexible to help ensure there are no layoffs to Education Assistants and other support staff.

With so many students studying at home, we need a strong, fully-staffed education system to get these students the support they need.

There are also many newcomer and refugee children in our schools who have language barriers, cultural barriers, and even Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We need our school liaisons and Education Assistants working with our youth, and supporting families who have additional challenges at home.

School bus drivers can also perform important roles to support our students while they are learning from home. Bus drivers can help deliver course materials from schools to students, and can even help support nutrition programs by delivering food hampers to students who need the additional support at home.

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MARK HANCOCK

National President/Président national

CHARLES FLEURY

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorier national

DENIS BOLDOC, PAUL FAORO, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

Other support staff continue to keep our schools clean and operating, and provide additional resources to teaching staff, students, and families.

In a letter to School Superintendents, you suggested that “savings generated as a result of the closures of schools must be held in a separate account”. It is CUPE’s position that this is not a time to generate savings, rather it’s a time to support staff and be creative.

School Divisions in Manitoba have already budgeted for their staff for the year, and those staff need to be focused on helping students succeed.

We look forward to working with you to develop ways to keep our members working for students and their families through these difficult times.

Yours sincerely,



ABE ARAYA
CUPE MANITOBA PRESIDENT



RICK PESCHEL
CUPE SCHOOL SECTOR COORDINATOR

cbc/cope 491

**CUPE represents approximately 5,000 school support staff in twenty-four school divisions across Manitoba, including:*

Brandon School Division
Division scolaire franco-manitobaine
Evergreen School Division
Hanover School Division
Interlake School Division
Kelsey School Division
Lakeshore School Division
Lord Selkirk School Division
Louis Riel School Division
Mountain View School Division
Park West School Division
Pembina Trails School Division
Pine Creek School Division

Portage la Prairie School Division
Prairie Rose School Division
River East Transcona School Division
Rolling River School Division
Seven Oaks School Division
St. James-Assiniboia School Division
Sunrise School Division
Swan Valley School Division
Turtle Mountain School Division
Turtle River School Division
Western School Division
Winnipeg School Division