

1. What are the objectives of the Association and for CUPE?

CUPE is the largest union in Manitoba and in Canada, and the strongest way forward for education support staff.

The objective of CUPE is to advance the interests of workers providing public services by fighting for higher wages, better benefits, stronger pensions and safer working conditions for our members.

In Manitoba, CUPE represents over 6,100 education support workers, including EAs, both in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba.

By fighting for province-wide improvements for education support workers, we can take bigger fights and achieve bigger wins than local Associations.

2. What is the purpose of paying dues?

Paying dues to a union ensures that your union has the resources needed to have your back in the workplace. As a well-resourced union, CUPE locals never need to worry about not having the resources to take on a fight. With CUPE, you have access to National Representatives, lawyers, researchers, communication reps, and a whole host of professionals to help your local.

With the National Legal Defence fund, small locals will never need to consider cost when deciding whether to proceed to arbitration and our \$150 million National Defence Fund means that during a strike, CUPE is able to provide strike pay and full benefits for all striking members.

3. We have a healthy bank account; What would you do with the funds?

If the Association merges into CUPE, they will become a CUPE local, and all funds currently associated to the Association will become local funds. What's more, many of the things the local has been saving for, such as strike pay, are fully covered by the national union, so you will have more flexibility to spend that money on promotion and support of your members.

4. What are the duties of the President, would you classify this a full-time position, and is there any training provided?

Whether a President is a full-time position is a local determination. Many locals choose to have a single, full-time President, such as CUPE 204 and CUPE 500. Other locals decide it's better to share the load and opt to have partial book-offs for multiple members, so workplace servicing can be done by the union representatives closest to home.

So long as the local decides fairly, CUPE National won't tell the local that they can or cannot book off one or more representatives.

However, with CUPE, you get resources by the National Union, including National Representatives, Legal Representatives, Research, Communications and Human Rights specialists and other national resources.

CUPE runs a full executive training course for all elected officers, as well as training for Presidents and stewards that are doing the work of representing members in front of management.

5. What training is available for members?

CUPE National has a full education department which has both off-the-shelf content that locals can attend at no cost, and education specialists that can help to develop specialized training for locals that need it, again, fully-covered by the national union.

CUPE also runs weeklong schools, training weekends, and other more specialized training in human rights, health and safety, or pensions.

6. Where do you see the organization in 10 years?

In 10 years, CUPE hopes that we have been able to leverage our power at the bargaining table to ensure that every CUPE support worker has the full health and safety protections, pensions, benefits and respect as other school-based staff like teachers.

7. If we go with a union, how much are we paying in union dues? How much are we going to pay off each pay cheque?

CUPE National dues are 0.85% of normal wages (excluding shift premiums, overtime etc). That covers your National Servicing Representative, CUPE specialist support, our in-house legal counsel and bargaining support.

Locals then choose an amount to charge over and above that. Often 0.4-0.65 for local business, depending on the desire and activity of the membership. Dues beyond 0.85 are a local choice, and the members will need to determine what resources they need to participate in CUPE Manitoba, send their stewards to advanced training, and other optional activities such as engaging in our political operations such as the Manitoba Federation of Labour, that were not previously an option for an Association.

8. Why is CUPE interested in representing EAs? I would like to understand their strategy. Is this just about increasing their dues base, or is it to wield more influence for their other employee groups in the division?

CUPE's focus is on achieving real gains for workers at the bargaining table and protecting workers from management.

Our core mission is to improve the lives of working people, and we know the best way to do that is to ensure solidarity among all workers. That's why we build bargaining support through campaigns and cooperate with other unions through the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

The fact is, CUPE doesn't make money signing up new members. Every single dollar of dues is spent representing and protecting members in the workplace. When new workplaces are added in Manitoba, the region receives more resources to protect and serve them.

9. What is their track record in representing other groups in this division? Has CUPE achieved substantially more for their members in the same bargaining years in our division?

CUPE has repeatedly fought back concessions and pushed legal issues forward when independent Associations lacked the resources to continue. Generally speaking, Associations bargain what is called a "me too" to CUPE, because they know we will achieve gains at the bargaining table, and ensures they get them too.

The fact is, your Association has already been benefiting from CUPE's strength at the bargaining table and across the education sector, as it is CUPE that sets the trend.

During the Pallister / Stephanson freeze to wages – it was CUPE working with our partners that beat that in court and ensured that education workers could negotiate at all. It was CUPE that refused to sign on to wage freezes and demanded the Teachers' wage pattern, and only once CUPE had broken that ground did it get extended to others. We took the issue all the way to the supreme court and at the end of the day, the Government chose to withdraw the legislation instead of face defeat.

10. What concrete representational gaps, issues, or concerns do they claim our current Association isn't addressing to justify this raid?

With CUPE, locals have the resources they need to fight grievances all the way to arbitration, run public-facing campaigns to build support during bargaining, get meetings with School Trustees or the Minister of Education to lobby for changes and budget allocation.

And in other ways, it's just that we are stronger together than we are apart. We are all better off when we can support each other in our fights against the employer.

11. What's in it for CUPE, financially, if we join them? I would like an actual dollar for dollar comparison of the dues that will come off our cheques and how those funds would be used; and compared to the services we currently get for our dues.

The benefit in joining together isn't for the union, it's for you and our existing members. When we show up to a bargaining table representing all members, we will increase our strength and ability to fight for improvements at the bargaining table.

Unions aren't like companies or employers. We are not for profit, and every dollar collected is reinvested in fighting for gains or protecting our members.

12. What guarantee do we have of having a strong voice within CUPE's structure? How will decisions be made about issues that uniquely affect EAs vs the concerns of other employee groups within the same union? What is our risk of being marginalized within such a large union?

If Education Assistants in RETSD decide to join CUPE, they will do so as their own local, separate from the other existing CUPE locals in RETSD. CUPE has strong locals – with independence on decision-making and local priorities. Labour Relations, Bargaining and even public-facing campaigns are local driven, and nationally supported.

Every coordinated action taken by CUPE includes voluntary participation by locals. If we are meeting with the Minister of Education to advocate for better workplace safety and health – your local can participate or pass. If your local wants to focus instead on better benefits or challenging an unfair employer policy – we will be there to support that initiative.

13. If we join CUPE, how much autonomy will we retain in decision-making and bargaining?

Bargaining proposals are set by local activists based on membership desires and supported by National Representatives.

It may be that due to our more significant research and communications reach, we have ideas around what your unit is missing – for instance, if another division has leapfrogged you with more wellness days or a better health spending account, we will have that information at our fingertips and bring that to your committee with recommendations – but decisions are made locally on what to prioritize.

14. Would we have control over our own contracts, or would it be centralized?

Bargaining committees are elected from the membership, just like now, and are supported with a National Representative who will build bargaining capacity, train committee members and let your group know of provincial or National trends.

Votes on ratification will be by members of your bargaining unit only.

Who will represent us in bargaining?

We currently have a very experienced labour lawyer who represents our interests.

Will we enjoy the same calibre of representation?

No one has a more experienced bargaining team than CUPE. Lawyers actually don't specialize in bargaining, they do it off the side of their desks and will often take a more cautious and legalistic approach to bargaining. The CUPE bargaining strategy means you will never be presented with a concession or two-tier agreement. The CUPE research team means your bargaining team will have all the information they need and the CUPE communications team means if we need to build public support or lobby, rally or protest, we have that capacity and the CUPE legal team means if the employer steps offside, you have lawyers on staff that don't cost your group a dime to access.

Just in Manitoba, we have 2 labour lawyers who are top in their field, and those reps have access to specialized legal services not on tap anywhere else in Manitoba.

15. Will we be relegated to the roster of junior paralegals to handle our concerns?

Your CUPE National Representative will always be fully trained to handle your bargaining table and have the full strength of the National union behind them.

16. What happens to our existing collective agreements or negotiated benefits if we join CUPE?

We are currently in contract negotiation.

- a) **What happens to this process?**
- b) **Will existing gains be protected, or renegotiated?**
- c) **Could you lose hard-won professional standards?**

Your current Collective Agreement remains in place until the next round of bargaining. You are changing your bargaining agent, not your agreement.

17. Will I have to donate my earned sick days to a pool?

No, your Collective Agreement will remain in place. CUPE doesn't negotiate concessions, so your sick days will not be taken away from you in a round of bargaining managed by CUPE. Ever.

18. Will I be required to strike if other employee groups within the union strike?

No. Strikes are workplace actions voted on and participated in by bargaining groups. You will only strike if you vote to strike.

19. What happens to all the pooled funds that our Association controls?

All Association funds will become your local funds.

20. How could this change of representation affect our relationship to the school division?

CUPE maintains a professional working relationship with our employers, including your school division.

That being said, employers know CUPE's policy includes a legal and strike fund that can't be driven dry by a single employer – so there does tend to be a little more respect that we have the strength to back up our word.

21. Please explain the financial structure of CUPE, as opposed to our Association.

- a) **Would CUPE provide similar regular and transparent exposition to our members as to where their dues go?**
- b) **What percentage of our dues would leave the province and be funnelled into CUPE National to fund their political aims and lobbying of the government?**
- c) **What percentage of our dues would be covering the presumably larger administrative costs of CUPE, vs what we currently pay to staff our Association?**

Every single dollar of dues raised in Manitoba is spent on Manitoba services. CUPE National has a dues rate of 0.85 and the local will choose its own dues rate on top of that for local activities. CUPE National's books are audited, as are each local's, so folks can know where their dues are going.

CUPE's administration actually shares significant cost savings compared to a smaller union. That's why we are able to fully fund your arbitration Representatives, legal services, bargaining Representatives and more.

- d) **How are you going to deal with the issue that L2 EAs are being paid less than L3 EAs and are doing the same job other than tube feeding?**
- e) **Job descriptions need to be changed. It simply isn't fair what is happening in our schools right now.**
- f) **How are you going to fight for the EAs that are being hurt multiple times daily by our students?**
- g) **We want a fair contract. Decent raises, personal days and chance to use our holidays anytime during the year and not have to wait 22 years.**
- h) **We deserve the right to enter a safe workplace and to be safe at school.**
- i) **How have our job descriptions changed? Back in the day, L2 and L3 were different, which is why people applied for the different positions. Now they're the same, other than tube feeding... How does this just happen?**

Bargaining strong contracts is a cornerstone to CUPE's principles. That includes fair pay for work done, proper health and safety and a job evaluation system that reflects and respects peoples' work.

22. What exactly does CUPE bring forward that is of direct benefit to EAs that our present Association doesn't provide?

CUPE represents EAs across Manitoba. That has significant advantages when it comes to talking health and safety, benefits and a pension. We know that working together, we can achieve real gains for education support workers that no one group could achieve on their own. CUPE provides coordination, strength and National resources to bear to achieve real results.

23. How does acquiring the EA employee group benefit CUPE directly? Are we not just a large group of potential income?

CUPE is a union, we are entirely made up of union members, which you would then become. There is no financial benefit to CUPE in taking on new members. There is no raise, no bonus, no bank account growth. There is a benefit to all education workers to be on the same team, pushing for real wage growth and respect in our workplace.

When you look at what workers can do together and have done together in Manitoba, it just makes sense. 7 years ago, all healthcare workers in Winnipeg came together under CUPE. The result? A 27 percent raise over 4 years with a massive expansion of their pension plan. We know that working together, we can achieve big gains. We want to bring that to education support workers.

24. What happens to the funds we as an Association currently have? Is this money just acquired by CUPE?

All existing funds are kept by the new CUPE local.

25. What guarantee do we as EAs have that we have a strong voice within the structure of CUPE?

In the CUPE structure – locals make the decisions and CUPE National is here to back those decisions up. We also know the more EAs we have here in Manitoba, the louder our voice can be. So there are going to be opportunities to coordinate with other EAs, join in mutual campaigns on issues you share and collaborate on bargaining proposals or legal challenges – but it's voluntary, the local will decide what tables to collaborate on, what campaigns to undertake and what fights to engage in.

26. We presently have legal representation from a very experienced and highly regarded labour attorney. Will we have legal representation by someone of equal calibre, or will our affairs be turned over to paralegals?

CUPE has 2 lawyers in Manitoba, as well as specialized legal experts they can draw on for things like supreme court appeals. CUPE isn't a legal firm, we don't hire paralegals.

27. Will I be required to strike if another employee group within the same union decided to strike?

No, each bargaining unit makes its own strike vote, and strikes are only undertaken by groups that have voted to strike.

28. We presently have a solid relationship with the school division, how does this change under CUPE?

CUPE also maintains professional working relationships with our employers, including your school division and the Manitoba School Board Association.

Because we have experienced National Representatives that also have these relationships, changes in your local leadership that might otherwise lead to institutional memory loss, file transfer slow-downs and fraying of the relationship can be mitigated.

29. What track record does CUPE have representing EAs?

Right here in Manitoba, we represent thousands of EAs in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba. We are Manitoba's largest support staff union. Across Canada, we represent over 130,000 education support workers – by far the largest in Canada. We are, without a

doubt, the union for education support workers in Canada. We understand education support staff and have a proven track record of bargaining success.

30. What exactly has CUPE done for other employee groups within our division?

CUPE has bargained strong contracts, fought arbitrations and legally challenged government wage restraint all the way to the supreme court of Canada and won the fight, with government repealing the bill to avoid a supreme court loss.

31. How exactly are the dues collected from our pay cheques used by CUPE for our benefit?

Your 0.85 dues to CUPE National pays for your National Representative, which would be assigned to your local, National Specialists, which your local would have access to including legal, research, human rights, health and safety, communications, political action and union education. We also have an education coordinator to ensure that our locals know what the trends across divisions are.

In addition, part of your dues fund goes to the National strike fund, which your local would have access to in the event of a strike or lockout, and the National defence fund, which your local will access if they want to run a campaign to support EAs (for instance, to improve health and safety for EAs).

32. What exactly would an EA be looking at as a financial impact? In actual dollar costs per pay period. Not interested in hearing this in percentages. I'd like to hear the actual dollar cost to members.

The cost depends on the income of each individual member, and the amount determined by this group as a local fund. But for example, if this local chose a dues rate of .4 – that would mean a total dues rate of 1.25 – so for every \$1000 of regular income you would pay \$12.50.

33. Do we as EAs retain any input, decision-making, and or bargaining power during contract negotiations?

The bargaining committee and members retain full decision-making ability during contract negotiations with one exception – CUPE will never allow a bargaining committee to take a concession or cut to their existing Collective Agreement. So if a local President tries to cut a deal to get rid of a benefit – CUPE would step in. Other than that, locals have National Representatives to advise them on what other locals have bargained, and the provincial and national trends, but decisions and priorities are made locally.

34. We are currently in negotiations, how does a CUPE raid affect this process?

If there is a determination for a merger, CUPE would begin to support your existing bargaining process immediately in an advisory fashion while final determinations are made to ensure the strongest possible deal in advance of formal determination.

35. Do union dues remain in the province, or are they absorbed into the CUPE National fund?

Every dollar collected in Manitoba is spent on servicing, protecting and fighting for Manitoba members. Some funds, like the Strike Fund, are held nationally and centralized for better strike pay when we need it, but Servicing Representatives and specialists all work right here in Manitoba. The CUPE offices are in Winnipeg,

36. Regarding CUPE representing two employee groups, how are potential conflicts resolved?

Case in point: Transportation wanted EAs to secure students, and EAs maintained that this is the responsibility of the driver.

Your local makes your priorities. If your local wants to fight EAs securing students through a grievance, arbitration or bargaining, then you have National support to make that a priority.

Other CUPE locals also have independence to campaign on issues that matter most to them.

No CUPE local is ever told they cannot take a political position on their work, or fight for that position. That's why different bargaining groups have different locals.

37. How does CUPE address the shortage of EA support within our division? What concrete steps would a union do to make positive change?

Ultimately, the best way to address a shortage of EAs is to improve the job through improvements to your Collective Agreement – better pay, better benefits, better working conditions. CUPE has a Political Action Coordinator and a communications and research team that can help your local push these improvements, as well as put political pressure on the Division and government to improve staffing levels. This can include supporting presentations to your School Board, budget presentations to both the School Board and Province, meetings with the Education Minister, public advertising, rallies or protests. With CUPE, we have the expertise and resources to push hard for the improvements our locals want to see.

38. As violence inflicted upon EAs is an ongoing issue and increasing worry for many, what exactly would CUPE do to assist EAs? Actual tangible plans?

Health and safety is a top priority for CUPE nationally, as well as our school division locals. With CUPE, we have a Health and Safety Specialist on staff to help create plans to deal with local issues. In addition, we lobby the Provincial Government for improvements to the Workplace Safety and Health Act, bargain health and safety with experienced bargaining teams and enforce health and safety in our workplaces with our legal team through arbitrations.

39. What does CUPE bring to the table regarding things our Association does for our membership? Examples: MTS PD, and our year-end recognition evening.

Your Association is welcome to continue to do the membership appreciation events that it does currently. CUPE fully supports locals engaging with members through education, training and member recognition. Our union education branch can help plan member training, or if the local wants, you can continue to hold the events you have traditionally held.

40. What are the fees we will pay for representation?

Dues to CUPE National are 0.85 percent of basic wages. This pays for National Representatives, specialists in communications, health and safety, research, political action, human rights, and legal as well as the National Strike Fund and National Defence Fund.

The local will also need to decide on a small additional amount for things like member recognition, training and education and other local business.

41. How much control over our accounts do we have for our own use? Scholarships, wage, grievances etc.

Locals have full autonomy over their bank accounts. CUPE National provides bonding for local treasurers and signing authorities – so local money is protected and insured against potential abuse – but only local officers are entitled to be signing officers and only local members are entitled to vote to spend money.

Some things – like grievances, won't need the same level of funding as currently, since you will have access to CUPE National staff for assistance.

42. Do we have control over our lawyer choice, or is it set from the union?

CUPE has 2 lawyers on staff to assist with legal concerns. However, locals can choose to hire outside counsel if they feel that is their benefit. If a local wants to hire a lawyer, they can hire whoever they choose. Most locals choose to use CUPE's in-house counsel for most of their legal concerns, and CUPE National Representatives for most of their non-legal concerns, but at the end of the day, locals have autonomy to make these choices.

43. How is this union different from our Association we currently have?

CUPE is a national union with significant resources to bring to bear. We have specialists on staff in health and safety, human rights, communications, research and political action. So, we are able to take your workplace concerns seriously, and so will employers.

With a \$150 million Strike Fund, you know that if the worst happens and you need to strike, CUPE has your back with a fund that can always pay your strike pay from day one of a strike until you are back at work. And CUPE pays benefits during a strike as well.

In addition, with our bargaining policy – you know that no CUPE contract will ever include a concession or two-tier provision – we only bargain forwards.

44. How are you going to negotiate for the items our members want - Wage increase, job violence protection, etc.?

With our National Bargaining Policy – CUPE always bargains forward, not back. We will never take a concession or two-tier proposal.

CUPE has specialists on staff and highly trained bargaining experts who know what the best language is on any given issue, and how to apply pressure to achieve meaningful improvements in the workplace.

Sometimes, that means pushing hard for significant wage improvements to increase retention and recruitment and show existing staff respect. Sometimes that means prioritizing health and safety through CUPE's health and safety specialists that know how to get results for school divisions across Canada.

45. Do our current elected members stay in place?

A process will be put in place to fully implement the transition to CUPE – this will involve a number of meetings to discuss and approve bylaws for the local, and then a process to hold elections under that new bylaw system.

While different locals make different decisions, generally your existing elected officers will work with CUPE during this transition period to ensure that local customs and culture is worked into the new CUPE bylaws for your consideration.

In other cases, members are looking for a culture shift, and will ask that other activists be included, and that's ok too. We are here to facilitate and support this group with the direction it wants to take – not to dictate.

46. Is there a set rate we pay to our elected members?

That will be up to the local to determine through its bylaws, which will be voted on by members.

47. Does our current contract stay in place?

Your current contract stays in place – you are choosing a new bargaining agent, not a new contract.

**48. How will you represent the membership during negotiations?
What are the priorities?**

We will immediately begin to support the bargaining team during the transition to ensure that we are not losing any ground during a transition process and bargaining is not held up.

Our priorities are your priorities. Given you are in the middle of a round of bargaining, we won't flip the table over and start from scratch. However, CUPE is pushing for significant health and safety improvements as well as real wage growth above inflation at all of our tables, and would hope that we are able to work with your Bargaining Committee to prioritize wages and health and safety prior to the formal changes coming in.

**49. Would you be forthcoming with information to the membership?
What would that look like? Ex. What is being negotiated?**

CUPE is always forthcoming to our members proactively, through audited books and bringing all workplace changes to a vote by impacted members.

We always meet with members before bargaining starts to go over bargaining proposals, and many locals choose to vote to accept the union's s ingoing proposals prior to the start of bargaining.

We always provide bargaining updates, so you know that your bargaining team is hard at work, and how the bargaining table is going

And we always bring our final bargaining package for a vote, with a full presentation on all the changes and the ability to accept or reject a new contract.

50. Is it possible to keep dues the same?

Dues to National are 0.85 percent and the local will be able to choose what above that is needed to conduct local business. That is true from our largest locals to our smallest.

51. How would you represent a member that has a problem with Administrators/ Board office? Ex. missed time at work

CUPE always ensures our members' rights are protected in the workplace. With our in-house CUPE legal team, you never need to worry that you won't have the money to bring something to arbitration. We make sure our members have justice in the workplace.

52. How often do we need a lawyer? What is the cost per year?

Every workplace needs legal assistance in different amounts, so CUPE isn't able to tell in advance what your legal needs would be – and even the same local may have different legal needs year over year. That's why CUPE has national staff and a National legal team ready to represent the local at no additional cost.

53. We are currently paying over \$100.00 per month for long term disability. How would you address this moving forward?

\$100 a month is a real bite out of take-home pay. While we don't currently represent you at the bargaining table, it is always CUPE's goal to move towards employer paid benefits including LTD.

54. A lot of people complain that our benefits aren't good. What would you do to address the situation?

Better benefits, a stronger pension, higher wages, health and safety – bargaining is about moving workers forward and ensuring local priorities are put first. If your benefits package is no longer adequate, we would prioritize those improvements at the bargaining table.

55. What are your thoughts on using technology to reach more members for meetings/votes? Ex. Using an online platform to increase member participation

Many CUPE locals have moved to hybrid meetings – where some members who want to participate attend in person while others can watch via online platform. Others have moved to some meeting and updates occurring electronically only. While CUPE always

strives to ensure that members get access to their union in the format of their choosing - at the end of the day, that's a local decision, and CUPE is here with solutions to support those local decisions.

56. How much will our dues be per pay cheque?

Dues are 0.85% to National plus a small amount for the local for local functions, decided by your membership. For example. If your membership chooses an additional 0.4%, your dues rate would be 1.25%, and for every \$1000 earned you would pay \$12.50/pay cheque. Dues are 100% tax deductible.

57. Are we looking to replace our current Association with a union just for us?

As a CUPE local you have the best of both worlds – full autonomy to spend your local money, make local decisions around bargaining and grievances and choose the issues that matter to you, while still having access to National resources including bargaining support, a legal team, communications, research, political action, health and safety and human rights.

58. Are we contributing to other unions such as Manitoba Health Workers? So, for example, if healthcare workers go on strike, are we paying for that?

No, there are no funds transferred between locals – your dues go to support and protect your members either through our National programs like the strike fund, servicing your local through National Reps and specialists or local events.

59. Are we contributing to unions just in Manitoba or Ontario as well?

No, every dollar raised in Manitoba is spent protecting Manitoba workers. We have offices in Winnipeg, Brandon and Dauphin and our National Reps, specialists and legal team is right here in Winnipeg with some National Reps closer to our other offices.

Questions For Both Unions:

60. What are the core values of the union?

CUPE's core values are all worker centric – advancing workers power in our workplaces through better wages, stronger pensions and improved benefits as well as moving forward on working conditions like health and safety and human rights.

We also advocate for better public services, like improvements to public education and health care, that would improve our communities and the lives *all* Canadians.

61. How does the union advocate for its members? For example, what strategies and methods are used by the union to represent its members effectively.

CUPE has every tool in the toolbox when it comes to advocating for members. We have experienced bargaining professionals to support locals in achieving gains at the table, experienced National Reps and a well-regarded legal department to fight grievances through to arbitration when our members rights have been violated. We advocate politically for improvements to education funding and board budgets with our communications and political action divisions. Our research and human rights departments can provide specialized information to locals on National Bargaining trends and our health and safety specialists coordinate across the country to ensure no local is left behind in the fight to improve PPE and workplace safety practises.

62. Does this union have experience in Education to best assist the Educational Assistant of RETSD? Can you provide examples of successful negotiations or contracts you've secured for similar workplaces?

CUPE is Manitoba and Canada's largest education support union. We represent EAs across Manitoba, including in Winnipeg. Currently, our members in Winnipeg are typically agreeing to a compensation package around 16% over four years as a baseline, often with extra compensation for low wage compression, or retention, recruitment or market initiatives.

63. How accessible are union Representatives to members?

National Representatives are here to support your elected officers and workplace stewards. Your local representation structure remains the frontline contact for members. However, because you will have a National Representative, we are able to provide alternative representation where there are personality conflicts or respectful workplace concerns, or there are questions about quality of representation. Union Representatives are always at presentations related to bargaining, or when making determinations regarding arbitration, and your National Representative will attend your general membership meetings to answer any questions.

64. What methods does the union use to communicate with its members?

CUPE locals can communicate with members in any way they want, and CUPE Representatives and specialists can help assist locals to find the best tools for you. Many CUPE worksites opt to have a Facebook group to coordinate social functions and provide meeting notices. CUPE locals regularly utilize a database to email or text members directly when there is new information. CUPE locals generally have a website, as does CUPE Manitoba and CUPE National for updates on what is going on outside

your worksite. But we know the best conversations happen in person, which is why regular membership meetings attended by your Representative are crucial.

65. How do investigating member's satisfaction to know if the current members are satisfied with their representation meeting their specific needs?

CUPE regularly conducts membership surveys through both our internal research branch or contracted through Probe Research to determine a number of factors including bargaining priorities and membership satisfaction. We also attend membership meetings to hear directly from members what they want from their union.

66. What support services does the union provide to his members? For example, training, etc....

CUPE is a full-service union and provides numerous benefits to our members. With union savings, members are able to access a suite of discounts at local stores. Our education branch puts on numerous courses through the year on everything from health and safety to anti-harassment and respectful workplace training. We also will provide training to your executive and stewards to help them be effective workplace Representatives. In addition – anything your local is currently doing is welcome to continue as a local activity – with CUPE, we aren't here to tell locals they can't engage with members, but rather to facilitate and support those engagements.

67. How does the union handle grievances and conflicts between members, and management?

When there are respectful workplace issues or grievances against management, CUPE is there with experienced National Representatives to support you through the process. We always put members rights in the workplace first.

68. How effective does the union manages disputes, and grievances?

With a National Rep and legal team supporting your local activists, CUPE takes grievances and arbitrations seriously. When a member's right in their workplace has been violated, CUPE fights to win, backed up by specialists in their field.

69. What efforts does the union make towards diversity and inclusion within its leadership and membership?

CUPE is a diverse union and strive towards ensuring our leadership and staff look like our membership. CUPE recruits and trains the majority of its staff from its own membership.

70. What is your Bargaining Power to represent members and best represent Educational Assistant interests when bargaining for their collective agreement?

The bargaining power of any union comes from our ability to act collectively for our common good. CUPE has bargaining specialists that will ensure that strategic planning is done prior to bargaining. Our research branch will ensure that this work group isn't left behind when national or provincial trends mean other groups are gaining a benefit and our National Bargaining Policy means members will never be presented with a concession or two-tier agreement.

71. What resources does the union have to support negotiations and members?

Right here in Manitoba we have a Research Representative that will help ensure the local has access to high quality bargaining proposals. Our communications team will ensure that if public support is needed to get a deal, we can campaign for it and our experienced bargaining teams will work with your local activists to advance the priorities of your membership.

72. Is your union autocratic or democratic?

CUPE is a democratic union. From local leadership, which will be elected by the members to provincial and national leaders, that are elected at conventions your work group will have delegates at. CUPE is a member run, member driven organization. And we know our power comes from our members – that's why CUPE National is here to support member priorities at the local level. That being said, we know, no members want to join a union to move backwards, which is why we do have policies ensuring no local can take a concession at the bargaining table, for instance.

73. What are the union's priorities for the members?

While locals generally set their local priorities, at a provincial level, CUPE is focused on securing improvement to health and safety, wages, benefits and pensions across our CUPE locals. Nationally, CUPE is focussed on moving forward on human rights and protecting and improving public services. These priorities are available for the local to pick up with high quality research, communications and political action tools, but at the end of the day, locals determine local priorities.

74. What opportunities do you offer to the members?

Every CUPE member has an opportunity to get involved in their union, from shop steward to National Representative. Our CUPE education branch has a full calendar of member education designed to build union strength in our workplaces, add skills in dealing with management and build capacity for local activists to become leaders.

In addition, every member has the right to have their say – bargaining proposals and ratification meetings, regular membership meetings and local Representatives supported with National specialists in the workplace mean we can get information from our office to your desk.

75. What services does the union offer to its members?

CUPE offers a wide range of services to its members, including member education, bargaining strong contracts, a nation best strike and defence fund, public facing campaigns for issues our members care most about, including health and safety, a political operation that gets meetings with government, including the Minister of Education to put our concerns on their desk.

76. What benefits would the union typically negotiated with the school division in the collective agreements for the members?

While each CUPE local sets its own priorities in bargaining, CUPE collective agreements in school divisions often include all or most of the following:

- Paid vacation time – with typically more vacation based on years of service
- Paid sick leave
- A pension plan
- Extended health benefits
- Dental plan
- Employee Assistance Plans
- Group Life Insurance
- Long Term Disability
- Wellness days (paid days off)
- Religious leave
- Maternity Leave top-ups
- Holidays
- Overtime
- Paid bereavement leave
- Mileage
- Swimsuit/winter clothing allowances

77. What is your union Philosophy and Values?

CUPEs core values are all worker centric – advancing workers power in our workplaces through better wages, stronger pensions and improved benefits as well as moving forward on working conditions like health and safety and human rights.

We also advocate for better public services, like improvements to public education and health care, that would improve our communities and the lives of *all* Canadians.

78. How does your union approach workplace issues and advocate for its members?

CUPE has every tool in the toolbox when it comes to advocating for members. We have experienced bargaining professionals to support locals in achieving gains at the table, experienced National Reps and a well-regarded legal department to fight grievances through to arbitration when our members rights have been violated. We advocate politically for improvements to education funding and board budgets with our communications and political action divisions. Our research and human rights departments can provide specialized information to locals on national bargaining trends and our health and safety specialists coordinate across the country to ensure no local is left behind in the fight to improve PPE and workplace safety practises.

79. Are there any specific advantages or disadvantages to choosing a large National union versus a smaller, independent Association?

CUPE provides the best of both worlds – the strength of a National union with specialized resources, but strong locals who retain autonomy and decision-making authority. While some large unions make decisions centrally– in CUPE our Locals – as directed by their members, are the final decision makers. We take direction directly from our locals.

In practise that means members set bargaining priorities but have all the information from our research and legislative affairs team on new trends and how we can achieve gains.

Members set communications and political action goals on lobbying the school boards or provincial government and our experienced team can get you meetings with politicians at any level and help prepare presentations that get results.

And there are economies of scale – our National Strike Fund means you get strike pay from the first day of a strike, with no concerns that it would ever be depleted. Our National Defence Fund means strikes are even less likely as National resources can be deployed to impact public opinion and get us stronger deals faster.

80. Do you have financial transparency? Please explain.

Locals are required to present their books at general meetings and are required to have trustees which audit the books and report to the members annually. Every level of the organization is similarly designed with National with provincial books being fully accessible and audited. In fact, CUPE provides such a high level of fiscal responsibility we are able to offer complimentary bonding of all local financial officials, so members can rest assured, their local accounts are fully protected.

81. How do you ensure members' voices are heard in negotiations and policy decisions? Can you provide examples of recent successful bargaining outcomes for members?

Members are the final decision makers when it comes to bargaining with one exception – which is that CUPE will never accept a concession at the bargaining table. We know when we stick together and push for more – we can achieve it.

Members in CUPE 204 just signed a deal which provided a defined benefit pension to thousands of new CUPE members that had failed to achieve a pension on their own for decades.

In education, CUPE locals are routinely seeing wage increases that exceed the current trends in the public sector. CUPE 110 (Winnipeg School Division) just received a \$1.00/hour wage adjustment on top of annual wage increases of about 3% per year. In Prairie Rose school division, we just negotiated a wage settlement for EAs which was about 3% per year plus \$1.75/hour. In St James school division, we just settled a deal which included more vacation time, more paid breaks, and average annual wage adjustments of about 3.5%.

Members across our education locals are planning now for a significant push on health and safety including bargaining proposals, provincial lobbying and a public campaign.

82. How does the union handle conflicts or disputes between leadership and members?

As a large National union, CUPE has multiple tools in the toolbox when it comes to conflicts between union leadership or activists and individual members.

Our primary focus will always be to ensure that health and safety of our members is protected, and members are able to fully participate in their union.

Next, CUPE has the ability to provide alternative representation for members who feel that their local leaders may not be able to provide fair representation.

Finally, if there is bullying or harassment that cannot be resolved. Members have access to a trial procedure under the CUPE National Constitution, and the National union can take action if leaders aren't fulfilling their duties fairly.

83. How responsive is the union to individual member concerns or workplace issues?

Outside of bargaining – workplace representation is the most important thing CUPE Reps do. You will continue to have local Representatives like you do today, although CUPE invests heavily in training our local stewards to be able to provide top notch service.

If you can't get an answer, or don't believe you are being given fair representation, you have a National Representative you can talk to and is available for more serious workplace issues or where the local Representative isn't available.

A National Representative will be assigned to your work site, and you will get to know them. They will attend local meetings, bargaining meetings and generally make themselves available to ensure that local representation issues are dealt with and members receive a high level of service.

84. Does the union provide educational resources or professional development opportunities?

CUPE has a union education program that offers a number of streams including steward training for individuals who want to become involved in their union, health and safety training to ensure our workplace safety and health committees have fully trained participants and members can protect themselves, human rights training and general workplace training such as anti-harassment.

Many locals choose to go above and beyond that to support professional development of their members. CUPE 204 for example, offers scholarships to assist members in advancing through their careers.

85. How are membership dues structured, and what percentage goes directly to member services vs. administrative costs?

Dues are 0.85% to National plus a small amount for the local for local functions, decided by your membership. For example. If your membership chooses an additional 0.4%, your dues rate would be 1.25%, and for every \$1000 earned you would pay \$12.50/pay cheque. Dues are 100% tax deductible.

In terms of administration vs member services, with a local of this size, it's likely that CUPE will spend 100 percent of your dues on member services for the foreseeable future – as training stewards, bargaining committees, local executives, writing bylaws and engaging your members in the CUPE structure is likely to take time.

Over time, the local would likely move to something closer to a 90/10 split.

86. Are there additional fees or hidden costs for members?

No, CUPE is Labour Board compliant and fully transparent with the dues structure. Because there is some local funding, we aren't able to say for certainty what you will choose for the dues, many locals choose an additional 0.3-0.8 percent on top of National dues for local functions. But that's your choice, not ours.

87. What is the union's track record in securing fair wages, benefits, and working conditions?

Members in CUPE 204 just signed a deal which provided a defined benefit pension to thousands of new CUPE members that had failed to achieve a pension on their own for decades.

In education, CUPE locals are routinely seeing wage increases that exceed the current trends in the public sector. CUPE 110 (Winnipeg School Division) just received a \$1.00/hour wage adjustment on top of annual wage increases of about 3% per year. In Prairie Rose school division, we just negotiated a wage settlement for EAs which was about 3% per year plus \$1.75/hour. In St James School Division, we just settled a deal which included more vacation time, more paid breaks, and average annual wage adjustments of about 3.5%.

These are just a handful of recent examples of recent victories that CUPE members across Canada routinely reach. CUPE is Canada's largest union – with over twice as many members as the next largest union. Workers across Canada choose CUPE as their union because CUPE fights for them and get results.

88. How does the union prepare for collective bargaining, and how are member inputs incorporated?

Members are the final decision makers when it comes to bargaining with one exception – which is that CUPE will never accept a concession at the bargaining table. We know when we stick together and push for more – we can achieve it.

Your CUPE National Rep will bring the local through a strategic planning exercise in advance of bargaining to help identify priorities.

Every CUPE local does a bargaining survey prior to the start of bargaining. This information will be used by the National Representative in the development of proposals and then proposals and priorities are generally presented to the membership, although different locals choose different formats for this discussion with their membership.

89. Have there been recent strikes or job actions with the union and how were they resolved?

Our most recent strike in Manitoba was at Ten Ten Sinclair – a health care facility that supports adults with disabilities in Winnipeg. After two weeks on strike they settled for approximately 25% wage increase over 6 years.

One of the advantages of being with CUPE is that employers know that we have the resources and the will to fight for what our members deserve. That means that most of the time CUPE members get a good deal without having to go on strike but have the

security of knowing they have a strong union – and critically a strong strike fund - behind them if they do.

90. How does the union encourage member participation in decision-making?

The local budget, bylaws and all motions on campaigns are brought to the membership for discussion and a vote.

At a provincial and National level, decisions are made, and leaders are elected at conventions made up of delegates elected by their Locals.

CUPE education offers training for members who want to become union activists, and its CUPEs goal to have as many stewards and activists in a workplace as possible. That means when it comes time to start working on better health and safety, we have an informed and active membership base to work together to press for better.

91. Are there regular meetings, surveys, or forums for members to express concerns?

Yes, most locals have a monthly membership meeting. CUPE Manitoba and CUPE National have regular conventions, but if someone wants to get involved in the larger union, there is ongoing committee work and events.

CUPE supports surveys when the locals request them, including bargaining surveys, and education support workers generally run a survey every year or so on matters impacting the sector.

92. How diverse and inclusive is the executive of the union?

The CUPE National Executive Board represents members from across Canada from all aspects of the public service and guarantees diversity representation. Similarly, the CUPE Manitoba Executive has full diversity representation guaranteed.

Locals are entitled to make their own determinations on the make-up of their executives; however, we encourage locals to consider diversity when setting their bylaws and executive structures and CUPE will support you in structuring your bylaws to ensure a variety of voices are heard at decision making tables.

93. Does the union take political positions, and do they align with the majority of members' views?

As a union that represents public sector workers, CUPE knows that politics directly impact our members every day. Members, through votes taken by their elected delegates at convention, provide direction to the elected leadership by adopting resolutions and policy papers. For examples, CUPE Manitoba played an active role in

fighting back against the previous Pallister governments attempt to eliminate school divisions.

CUPE locals or groups of locals can also take political positions which should go to their membership for support of the campaign. CUPE National Specialists including the Political Action Coordinator and Communications Specialist will help the local pursue those positions through a campaign and meetings with government as well.

94. How does the union handle disagreements among members on policy or opinions?

CUPE facilitates debate at all membership meetings where policy is on the agenda and respectful debate is key to achieving solidarity.

We don't all need to agree on every issue, but debate has to be respectful, and the decisions need to be made democratically. We may have different opinions on various issues, but our goal is to ensure we can all work together to make life better for education support workers.

95. How are the executive elected or appointed, and what checks exist to prevent abuse of power?

Your local executive will be elected according to your bylaws once they are in place. The CUPE National Constitution has several protections against abuse by members depending on the type of abuse.

Your National Representative is appointed by CUPE National and is in attendance at local functions to ensure abuse doesn't occur.

However, if it does occur an executive member abusing their position can be brought to trial under the National Constitution and removed if the trial panel finds they have failed to uphold their duties.

If the abuse is more systemic, by a full executive for instance, and it is putting members at risk, the National Union will remove that executive and hold new elections. This is extremely rare and would happen in cases of financial abuse or attempts to give away existing benefits at the bargaining table.

96. What is the process for recalling or replacing an executive if members are dissatisfied?

A removal process can be included in the bylaws. The CUPE National Constitution provides for a trial procedure where an executive member needs to be removed urgently. Otherwise, generally speaking elections for President occur every other year, with other executive positions occurring in off years. So, if a member isn't happy with

their local representation and it isn't for misconduct, the best thing to do is often run to replace them,

97. What makes this union a better choice than others?

CUPE is the largest union in Manitoba, the largest union in Canada, and the strongest way forward for education support staff.

The objective of CUPE is to advance the interests of workers providing public services by fighting for higher wages, better benefits, stronger pensions and safer working conditions for our members.

By fighting for province wide improvements for education support workers, we can take bigger fights and achieve bigger wins than local Associations.

98. How effectively does the union address discrimination, harassment, or workplace safety concerns?

When there are respectful workplace issues or grievances against management, CUPE is there with experienced National Representatives to support you through the process. We always put members rights in the workplace first.

CUPE has the ability to provide alternate representation to an accused person and the victim – so you can rest assured your representation isn't skewed by someone who is also talking to the person who did you harm.

On workplace safety and health CUPE has achieved significant gains for members and are now starting a campaign in the school sector to deal with the major health and safety challenges being faced by support workers. This needs to include PPE, training and regulatory changes around our right to know. We are confident by standing side by side across the education support sector we can advocate louder and stronger than any one group on their own.

99. What protections exist for whistleblowers or members who file complaints?

The union is able to serve as a buffer for whistleblowing and complaints against management. Once your process is wrapped in the union, you are protected from retaliation. It's against the law in Manitoba to engage in retribution for participating in a labour board process (such as grievance arbitration) or a health and safety complaint.

CUPE has the resources to ensure any wrongful dismissal to punish a worker in the workplace for using their union to advance or protect their rights will be fought and won.

100. How does the union plan to address future workplace trends (automation, remote work, etc.)?

CUPE recently came out with a new workshop and program called “AI in the workplace” to help workers identify and fight the expansion of AI in the workplace including bargaining language to prevent job loss.

We also have language provided by our in-house researchers on job security, technological change and contracting out to protect the work of our members.

Finally, when the Conservative government tried to change the *Labour Relations Act* to make it easier to replace workers with machines, it was CUPE, joining with other provincial unions that fought back and won, protecting all workers, not just CUPE members from this attack on our rights.

101. Does the union have strategies for growing membership and maintaining relevance?

CUPE is a union that is constantly growing, because workers want to join a union that has their backs. As the largest union in Canada, CUPE has new groups joining us regularly both right here and across Canada. In the last ten years, CUPE has grown by 120,000 members. In Manitoba alone, CUPE has grown by 10,000 members in the last six years – gaining new members in school divisions, health care, and social services. Workers in Manitoba, and across Canada, are choosing to join CUPE every day. Our full time Manitoba organizer spends the vast majority of her time talking to un-unionized workers about joining a union, because the more workers that join a union, the more ability we have to work together to see pro-worker changes across Manitoba.

102. How responsive is the union to individual member concerns or workplace issues?

Outside of bargaining – workplace representation is the most important thing CUPE Reps do. You will continue to have local Representatives like you do today, although CUPE invests heavily in training our local stewards to be able to provide top notch service.

If you can’t get an answer, or don’t believe you are being given fair representation, you have a National Representative you can talk to and is available for more serious workplace issues or where the local Representative isn’t available.

A National Representative will be assigned to your work site, and you will get to know them. They will attend local meetings, bargaining meetings and generally make themselves available to ensure that local representation issues are dealt with, and members receive a high level of service.

103. How many EAs does the union currently represent in Manitoba?

CUPE represents approximately 6,100 education support workers in Manitoba – by far the most of any union in Manitoba. CUPE represents thousands of EAs right here in Winnipeg and across Manitoba.

104. What experience do you have in negotiating contracts for EAs in school divisions? Can you please provide some examples of recent successes in bargaining for EAs in similar school divisions?

CUPE represents approximately 6,100 education support workers in Manitoba – by far the most of any union in Manitoba. CUPE represents thousands of EAs right here in Winnipeg and across Manitoba. Each local we represent has their own collective agreement that we have successfully bargained.

Recently we've been successfully achieving additional adjustments for EAs in many school divisions, over and above the prevailing trends in the public sector. For example, EAs in Prairie Rose and Lakeshore received an additional \$1.75/hour on top of regular raises, in Mountain View and Turtle Mountain EAs are receiving up to \$1.25/hour over their regular raises, and in Western SD they received an additional \$1.00/hour on top of regular raises.

105. How does the union plan to address issues like workload, safety, and inclusion support in schools?

With CUPE, locals have the resources they need to fight grievances all the way to arbitration, run public facing campaigns to build support during bargaining, get meetings with School Trustees or the Minister of Education to lobby for changes and budget allocation.

And in other ways, it's just that we are stronger together than we are apart when we can support each other in our fights against the employer.

106. What strategies will the union use to ensure strong bargaining outcomes for EAs?

Members are the final decision makers when it comes to bargaining with one exception – which is that CUPE will never accept a concession at the bargaining table. We know when we stick together and push for more – we can achieve it.

Your CUPE National Rep will bring the local through a strategic planning exercise in advance of bargaining to help identify priorities.

Every CUPE local does a bargaining survey by our research department prior to the start of bargaining. This information will be used by the National Representative in the development of proposals and then proposals and priorities are generally presented to the membership, although different locals choose different formats for this discussion with their membership.

In addition, CUPE education locals in Manitoba coordinate their bargaining strategies through the CUPE Manitoba School Division Sector. This coordination ensured that no CUPE locals accepted the Pallister wage freeze and CUPE, unlike other unions, received the same wage gains as Teachers did under the last government.

107. Are there regular opportunities for members to provide feedback or influence union decisions?

Most locals have a monthly membership meeting. CUPE Manitoba and CUPE National have annual conventions, but if someone wants to get involved in the larger union, there is ongoing committee work and events.

CUPE supports surveys when the locals request them, but there is always a bargaining survey, and education support workers generally run a survey every year or so on matters impacting the sector.

108. Can you provide a breakdown of how dues support EAs specifically?

Every dollar collected in Manitoba is spent on servicing, protecting and fighting for Manitoba members, some funds, like the strike fund, are held Nationally and centralized for better strike pay when we need it, but Servicing Representatives and specialists all work right here in Manitoba, the CUPE offices are in Winnipeg, Brandon and Dauphin.

109. What legal resources does the union provide for EAs facing workplace issues?

CUPE has every tool in the toolbox when it comes to advocating for members. We have experienced bargaining professionals to support locals in achieving gains at the table, experienced National Reps and a well-regarded legal department to fight grievances through to arbitration when our members rights have been violated.

110. How does the union advocate for EAs at the provincial government level?

Members set communications and political action goals on lobbying the school boards or Provincial Government and our experienced team can get you meetings with politicians at any level and help prepare presentations that get results.

CUPE regularly presents budget presentations and is consulted on new legislation and regulations. So, by joining CUPE, you get your voice at those tables.

111. Have you successfully lobbied for better EA wages or working conditions in Manitoba?

Yes. Many of the gains in Manitoba in the education support sector have been because of CUPE provincial lobbying. That includes new stats, domestic violence leave, increasing education funding, fighting the provincial wage freeze legislation, and more.

We are currently engaged in a health and safety campaign to increase health and safety of our EAs, and we hope you can join us in making this more effective with more voices and support.

112. How does the union prepare members for potential job actions (e.g., strikes, work-to-rule)? What financial support is available during a strike?

CUPE has several important contributions to preparing for strike. First, our communications department, working with our National Defence fund, will prepare what is called a “strike avert” campaign. This is money that comes to help persuade an employer to settle the contract and show our strength and preparedness for a strike. This often includes significant advertising and strike preparations.

If the worst happens and a strike occurs, our expert team will help you plan your strike to minimize impact on members while maximizing impact on the employer. This can include rotating strikes, work to rule, or other legal strike options that ramp up pressure over time before an all-out strike.

Our Essential Services working group will ensure that under the new provincial laws, your members will maximize your right to strike, to ensure it is an effective measure towards achieving your goals.

The minimum weekly strike pay per CUPE’s National Strike Fund regulations is \$350/week for 20 hours/week of strike duties for the first five weeks. Then it increases to \$375/week for weeks 6 to 11, \$400/week for weeks 12 to 16, and \$450/week starting week 16. In addition to the above, CUPE pays for the full cost of benefits for all striking members.

During this time, CUPE also pays normal strike costs such as continued advertising and lobbying to bring the matter to a close.

113. What has been the union's track record in resolving disputes without prolonged strikes?

Our last strike in Manitoba was at Ten Ten Sinclair about a year ago, and that lasted two weeks, and resulted in a 25% wage increase over 6 years.

In Ontario, back in 2022, 55,000 education workers walked off the job to protest government legislation which stripped education workers of the right to strike. Within days the government of Ontario caved, repealed the legislation, and education support workers won an annual raise of \$1.00/hour.

A) Cheaper health/dental benefit rates

The workgroup and members retain full decision-making ability on bargaining priorities, but having the employer pay a higher percent of the benefits is a normal bargaining proposal that CUPE has achieved numerous times. Locals have National Representatives to advise them on Provincial and National trends, but decisions are made locally, so if this is a priority, we will help you achieve it.

B) Better health medical insurance coverage

The workgroup and members retain full decision-making ability on bargaining priorities, and improving benefits is a bargaining proposal that CUPE brings forward at almost every table and almost always achieves on. Benefits need to improve in nearly every round of bargaining to keep up with inflation and market conditions. Locals have National Representatives to advise them on provincial and National trends, but decisions are made locally, so if this is a priority, we will help you achieve it.

C) Opportunity for longer working hours (i.e. 8-4)

Moving towards full time hours for EAs that want them is a current focus of the CUPE Education Support Workers Sector Committee and we are looking at innovative ways to help make that happen. We hope you will join us and make this work even stronger.

D) Opportunity to have some choices on more job specific training

Adding training to your workplace is a regular component of bargaining, and we are happy to support this as a local priority. School divisions have different continuing education and professional development plans and programs, and we look forward to digging into the details and helping you achieve gains.

E) Opportunity to choose professional development

Adding training to your workplace is a regular component of bargaining, and we are happy to support this as a local priority. School divisions have different continuing education and professional development plans and programs, and we look forward to digging into the details and helping you achieve gains.

F) Cost of living increase as well as wage level increase

A key component to current bargaining is the necessity to bargain increases well above the rate of inflation to catch up from high inflation years where workers fell behind, and then keep up, with good raises that don't allow workers to fall behind again. Every CUPE agreement signed in the education sector has had a mixture of market and Cost of Living adjustments.

G) Job stability

Ending precarity of work, adding job security and ensuring that being an EA is a job you can rely on to raise a family is absolutely crucial. CUPE has specific bargaining processes to take power away from the employer and ensure that layoffs, contracting out and cuts don't hurt our members.

H) School stability

Improving the rights for senior employees to have school choice is a bargaining proposal that CUPE brings forward and achieves for school workers when that is what they want. Locals have National Representatives to advise them on provincial and National trends, but decisions are made locally, so if this is a priority, we will help you achieve it.

114. Is there any way any one of you can change work hours from 6 to 8 hours per day to give time for prepping for our students and the possibility for more male employees to apply to support their families and for people not needing a second job to support themselves and their families?

Moving towards full time hours for EAs that want them is a current focus of the CUPE Education Support Workers Sector Committee and we are looking at innovative ways to help make that happen. We hope you will join us and make this work even stronger.