

CUPE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2024



"Local 5678 should create and foster a sense of unity and belonging with respect among all members through active participation, communication and education"

Editor: Lois Linttell

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Erin Hurford, President of CUPE 5678 / 5678-1



As the sunshine is striving to come out, we can see the school year coming to an end for the students. Once again this has been a difficult year, especially struggling with inadequate staffing to best care for the students and schools alike. There is a bit of light at the end of the tunnel for the end of this school year. As you are aware, Bill 124 remedy payments will be paid out by the beginning of June. We are still working on details and clarification with the Board to ensure that everyone receives the retroactive payments that they are entitled to. If you worked for the Board anytime between September 1, 2019 and the date that the new rate takes effect, there will be a payment made to you. As of this time, we are still working with CUPE National and STEO to find out how and when 5678-01 will be eligible for this increase.

For anyone who is no longer working for the board, as long as your banking information has not changed, you too will receive your remedy pay. In the event that your banking information has changed, since leaving the board, please reach out to remedy@ucdsb.on.ca.

At a Joint Health and Safety meeting, Chief Psychologist Jennifer Currie, was brought in to discuss the use of gym mats as a form of PPE. It was clear that gym mats were not to be used for PPE, only to create a privacy barrier for the student who is dysregulated. As soon as that gym mat becomes PPE, i.e. student is kicking it, the gym mat is to be put down. At no time should it be used to for protection from a student. You need to email your administrator that the safety plan needs to be changed and gym mats need to be taken out if the plan. You should also let your union know if this is happening.

Enjoy the Spring and hope to see you all at the GMM April 20, 2024 at Russell High School starting at 10 am. This meeting will also be held virtually. Please check your CUPE email for more information.



ARTICLE 15.02 – BREAKS / REST PERIODS

By Lois Lintell, Vice-President Education

“Employees working five (5) hours or more per day shall be permitted two (2) paid 15-minute rest periods totaling thirty (30) minutes each day.

Employees working less than five (5) consecutive hours per day, but more than three (3) consecutive hours, shall be permitted one (1) paid rest period of fifteen (15) consecutive minutes per day.

One (1) rest period shall occur in the first half of the normal shift and the other in the second half, in a suitable area made available by the Employer. Rest periods should not occur at the beginning or end of the day. ”

AUDIT REPORT

By Sheila Robertson, Secretary Treasurer

Article B.3.12 of the CUPE Constitution requires all locals to complete an annual trustees’ report.



Trustees Elsie Day, Carol Bamford and Shelly Crowe conducted an audit February 14th, 2024 for the period July 1 – December 31, 2023.

Recommendations were submitted and a report will be presented at the next General Membership Meeting scheduled for April 20th, 2024 – Russell High School, Russell, ON.

CLASSIFICATION FORUMS

From: CUPE 5678 and 5678-01 Executive

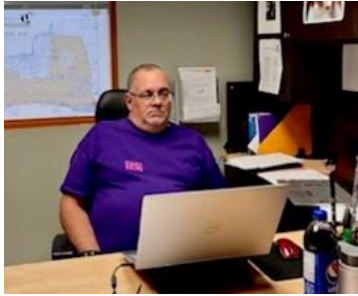


Hello CUPE 5678 and 5678-01 Members,

We regret to inform you that due to lack of registrations for the upcoming Classification Forums, they will be cancelled. If you had registered for a forum, a Steward or Representative will be contacting you to have a conversation and to provide you with any information that was going to be shared.

W.S.I.B. INJURED WORKER /RETURN to WORK EASTERN REPORT

By David James, WSIB/Injured Worker/Return to Work Representative



Greetings to all our CUPE 5678 Members. As your Eastern Representative my role is to address all your concerns and questions and the proper steps / procedures in filing your WSIB/ IW/ RTW claims and help you understand your rights, privilege, and obligations under W.S.I.B.

I can't stress enough the importance of ensuring the proper documents have been submitted and in a timely fashion to ensure there is no delays or issues in receiving your medical claim payments.

No matter how small your injury may be **REPORT IT** right away.

As we all know we are working short staffed most days and the aggression and abuse is on the rise. Please fill out the online reporting to have everything documented. As your Representative most of my dealings right now are with concussions and the high-rise mental stress.

Self care is needed by all, seek help if needed. You can always reach out to Nancy Ripley or myself at anytime. All the forms you will need can be found in your AGENDA along with all Executive, Stewards and Representatives contact numbers.

Always remember that the only medical form that is accepted by HR and CUPE 5678 is the CUPE Medical Form. Always bring that with you to your doctors to have all restrictions and limitations in writing.

I am very proud to say that with support of our local executive I now have successfully completed all the necessary Levels (1 through 6) and introduction to Health & Safety Level 1 to better support our members.

Health & Safety WSIB Injured Worker/ RTW Online Forums

On November 20th we held Two (2) Online forums for our members to participate in with questions and concerns in the workplace to help our members with questions and concerns with W.S.I.B. & Health & Safety. Sadly, to report not one member turned up for the morning meeting and only one (1) for the evening meeting. With the high rise of violence in the workplace, injuries, mental & stress conditions we thought this would have been one of the biggest forums and participation. With everyone I spoke with they all had concerns and questions but say they didn't know about the forum.

Once again notifications went out well in advance and I'm very sad to announce that these subsequent online forums have been cancelled, as the pre-registration had little to no people sign up.

If you have any questions, concerns, or just need support with any W.S.I.B. related questions PLEASE feel free to contact Nancy Ripley, WSIB/Injured Worker/Return to Work Western Representative or myself and we would be happy to answer all your questions.

ADHOC Relocation Committee.

1- At the January, 2024 GMM Meeting, after my presentation, it was voted on by the membership that we remain in our current location for the time being as we wait for the market to settle and interest rates to become a little more stable before addressing this issue further.

APRIL 28TH – DAY OF MOURNING

By: Lois Lintell, Vice-President Education

Well into the 20th century, coal miners brought canaries into coal mines as an early-warning signal for toxic gases, primarily carbon monoxide. The birds, being more sensitive, would become sick before the miners, who would then have a chance to escape or put on protective respirators. In 1984, the Canadian Labour Congress established April 28th as the National Day of Mourning in Canada to remember and honour those who have died, been injured or suffered illness in the workplace. We mourn the dead, and fight for the living.



We stand together with the world's workers to remember:

- All those killed on the job, and those suffering workplace illness or injuries.
- Children left parentless, and families facing hardship
- Young workers who are killed or injured at a much higher rate
- Women, whose hazards are often unrecognized or ignored
- The working wounded denied fair compensation.

Because unions help create new laws and protections, we:

- Demand the enforcement of health and safety laws
- Denounce those who place profits before workers' health
- Proclaim our right to safe workplaces and respect on the job
- Vow that "an injury to one is an injury to all".



CUPE 5678-1 WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

By Carrie Laflamme, Vice-President – Transportation

We are Education Support Workers who manage and plan school bus routes. We are employed by Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario, a Transportation Consortium set up between the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO).

STEO was formed in February 2012, as a result of The Ontario Ministry of Education policy for school boards to form transportation consortia. Before STEO was formed, most of us were employed by one of the school boards and worked in the Transportation Department. The unionized CUPE members from the boards became members of CUPE 5678-1.

We are a small group with these job classifications.

- Accounting Assistant
- GIS Administrator
- Transportation Clerk/Receptionist
- Transportation Planner
 - Regular school bus route planner
 - Van and Wheelchair route planner
 - Team Lead



Our job descriptions include such tasks as:

- Plan, create and maintain changes to school bus routes.
- Provide clerical and administrative support and act as a liaison between STEO and parents, school staff and bus operators.
- Handle accounts payable, accounts receivable and prepare invoices.
- Maintain our routing software, transportation database and digital map.

Even though our Collective Agreement is with STEO we are still very much tied to the Ministry of Education funding. This is because the funding for school transportation services is provided from the Ministry of Education to the School Boards.

We are in negotiations at the same time as other Education Support Workers across Ontario and our collective agreement expires at the same time. Our collective agreements have always followed identical wage increases and length of the agreement as other Education Support Workers collective agreements across the province. Recently transportation consortiums can be members of the Ontario School Board Council of Unions (OSBCU) and can participate in their events.



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, STEWARDS, REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES

Term * December 1st, 2022 to November 2025 Term ** December 1st, 2022 to November 2024
 2495 Parkedale Ave., Unit 3B, Brockville, ON K6V 3H2 1-877-342-2873 www.cupe5678.ca

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (7)		
President:	Erin Hurford * Erin.hurford@cupe5678.ca	<i>Registered Early Childhood Educator</i> - Full Time Release- 12 months (613) 342-0434 CUPE Office, Brockville (613) 349-4300 Cell
Education Vice-President	Lois Lintell ** Lois.lintell@cupe5678.ca	<i>Secondary Office Administrator</i> Vankleek Hill Collegiate Institute, Vankleek Hill
Education Vice-President	Darrin Cryderman ** Darrin.cryderman@cupe5678.ca	<i>Secondary Office Administrator</i> Seaway District High School, Iroquois
Transportation Vice-Pres. (Unit 5678-1/ STEO)	Carolyn Laflamme * Carrie.laflamme@cupe5678.ca	<i>GIS Administrator</i> Student Transp. of Eastern Ontario, Prescott
Secretary-Treasurer	Sheila Robertson ** Sheila.robertson@cupe5678.ca	<i>Secondary Office Administrator</i> - Full Time Release- 12 months (613) 342-0434 CUPE Office, Brockville
Recording Secretary	Lorrie Somerville * Lorrie.somerville@cupe5678.ca	<i>Elementary Office Administrator</i> Wellington Elementary S., Prescott
Chief Steward	Sheena Hagerman ** Sheena.hagerman@cupe5678.ca	<i>Itinerant Student Support Worker</i> - Full Time Release – 12 months (613) 342-0434 CUPE Office, Brockville (613) 640-2748 Cell
STEWARDS (5)		
Steward - Transportation (Unit 5678-1/STEO)	Craig Gallagher ** Craig.gallagher@cupe5678.ca	<i>Transportation Planner</i> Student Transp. of Eastern Ontario, Prescott
Steward -T.R. Leger/Alternative Ed	Tammy Caswell ** Tammy.caswell@cupe5678.ca	<i>Instructional Assistant</i> Seaway District High School
Steward – Classroom Support	Angela Parks-Gibson * Angela.parks-gibson@cupe5678.ca	<i>Educational Assistant</i> Duncan J. Schoular P.S., Smiths Falls
Steward – Facilities & IT Services	Russell Snetsinger * Russell.Snetsinger@cupe5678.ca	<i>Technologist</i> Cornwall Collegiate & Vocational School
Steward – Office/Clerical	Karen Gallagher ** Karen.gallagher@cupe5678.ca	<i>Elementary Office Administrator</i> Vanier Public School, Brockville
REPRESENTATIVES (3)		
Representative – Health & Safety	Shelley Swerdfeger* Shelley.swerdfeger@cupe5678.ca	<i>Lead Custodian</i> South Edwardsburg Public Sch., Johnstown
Representative – 1st WSIB/Injured Worker/RTW	Nancy Ripley * Nancy.ripley@cupe5678.ca	<i>Registered Early Childhood Educator</i> Commonwealth Public School, Brockville
Representative – 2nd WSIB//Injured Worker/RTW	David James ** David.james@cupe5678.ca	<i>Educational Assistant</i> St. Lawrence SS, Cornwall
TRUSTEES (3)		
Trustee (Term to 2024)	Carol Bamford ** Carol.bamford@cupe5678.ca	<i>Casual (RETIRED STEO)</i>
Trustee (Term to 2025)	Elsie Day * Elsie.day@cupe5678.ca	<i>Casual (RETIRED)</i>
Trustee (Term to 2026)	Shelly Crowe Shelly.crowe@cupe5678.ca	<i>Secondary Off. Assistant</i> Gananoque Sec. School

RETIREMENT CORNER

By Lois Linttell, Vice-President Education

In recognition of years served as a CUPE member, retirees have the option of choosing an inscribed mantel clock OR engraved wristwatch as their retirement gift from the Local.



Gift Order form available at www.cupe5678.ca or lois.linttell@cupes678.ca
Information needed to place order: NAME / Worksite / Job Classification/ Seniority Date/ Date of Retirement/ # of years with the Board (based on seniority list) / Home Phone Number / Home e-mail / Home Address / Choice of Gift

Scott Brush	Lead Custodian	Rothwell-Osnabruck, Ingleside	1986-2024
Julie Sayeau	EA	Athens DHS	1988-2024
Ron Brydges	Custodian	Commonwealth PS, Brockville	1989-2024
Scott Hepburn	Sr. Technologist	Vankleek Hill Collegiate Instit.	1993-2024
Marianne Kenny	Sec. Off. Admin.	Rideau DHS, Elgin	1993-2024
Janet Graham	EA	Arklan Comm. P.S., Carleton Pl.	1998-2023
Darsi Kingsbury	Inst. Assistant	T.R. Leger, Cornwall	1998-2024
Pat Loney	Custodian	Seaway DHS, Iroquois	2000-2024
Cynthia Courtland	EA	Arklan Comm. P.S., Carleton Pl.	2003-2024
Theresa Chisholm	Elem. Off. Assist.	Bridgewood PS, Cornwall	2020-2023

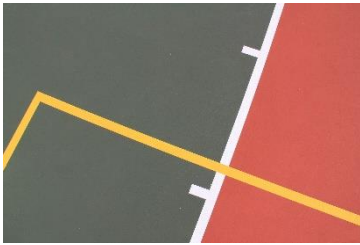
SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

By Sheila Robertson, Secretary Treasurer

January 27th, 2024 General Membership Meeting:

- *Member in Attendance \$100 Draw* winner **Melanie Cater, RECE @ Russell Public School.**
- *Progressive Member Engagement \$1,700.00 Draw* winner **Calia Williams.** Calia was NOT in attendance, next draw will be \$1,800.00.





SPEAKER'S CORNER

By Russell Snetsinger, Steward Facilities Services & IT

The Ontario government has recently launched a series of advertisements under the slogan "It's Happening Here in Ontario." While seemingly innocuous, these ads appear to be more than just simple promotions of the province. Instead, they are the early stages of a subtle political campaign aimed at bolstering the government's image in the run-up to upcoming elections.

These ads carry subtle political undertones. They prominently feature Premier, Doug Ford and other conservative government officials, that project an aura of leadership and competence. Moreover, the messaging frequently aligns with the government's policy priorities and achievements, implicitly attributing any successes to its stewardship. No mention of Extreme Rental Pricing, Housing Market Pricing that is beyond First Time Young working people, affordability, and Healthy Food Pricing, that are beyond reasonable.

Do NOT be misled. Call it what they are Campaign Ads paid for by you and I, thus blurring the lines between governance and campaigning.

These ads are NOT transparent, impartial, and respectful of democratic norms.

It is essential to hold the Ontario government accountable for its actions and ensure that public resources are used responsibly, not as free Campaign Advertising.

DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCILS

By Lois Lintell, Education Vice-President

Local 5678 is affiliated with 3 District Labour Councils:

- Cornwall
- Brockville
- Lanark.



Councils bring together local unions in the community to provide strike support for local unions, help workers organize and offer education programs. Some labour council activities -Advocating for broader social goals such as childcare and participation in other activist ventures - fundraising for charity.

- Cornwall District Labour Council recently elected 5678 member Russell Snetsinger as Vice-President.
- Brockville District Labour Council recently elected 5678 member Erin Hurford as a Trustee and Nancy Ripley as Member at Large.
- Lanark District Labour Council is represented by Elsie Day from Local 5678.



HEALTH & SAFETY

By Shelley Swerdfeger, H & S Representative

Spring Showers bring slippery floors, be sure to use the wet floor signs. Certain shoes are slippery when wet so be careful of your footwear choice, proper footwear for the proper activities. Please

do not wear open back shoes when running or for fast activities.

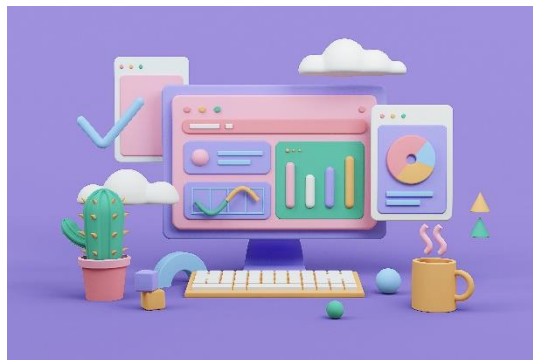
It was brought to my attention that some Custodians feel their uniforms are too dark to go out in the evening. They cannot be seen by cars and wondered about High Visibility pants. I brought it to the JHSC meeting and the recommendation is that anyone that has a concern is to email their Supervisor and ask for a High Visibility Vest. These vests will be left in the Custodian's office to be worn outside to the dumpster or for whatever task needs to be done when it is dark out.

For years H & S have been saying Gym mats are not PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). At the last JHSC (Joint Health and Safety Committee) meeting on March 25th, 2024 we had a guest speaker, Dr. Jennifer Curry, who spoke of the use of gym mats. Dr Curry said "they are not to be used to be kicked or hit by a student they are to be used as a barrier or a false wall to give the student having a "moment" privacy only." If seen in a student's safety plan read carefully and ensure this is what the gym mats are to be used for. If a student uses the Barrier/Privacy wall for a kicking/hitting item, you will then need to email your Administrator that the Safety Plan needs to be changed and Blocker pads are needed because the Barrier was used. If there is no follow up, please resend your email and CC: Shelley Swerdfeger and Erin Hurford.

Also fill out the Online Incident report, check off Violence, and put exactly what happened and that the student Kicked or Hit the Gym mat in the Comment Description section and the safety plan needs to be changed.

Enjoy the beautiful weather!

Stay safe!





WSIB/INJURED WORKER/RETURN to WORK WESTERN REPORT

By Nancy Ripley, WSIB/Injured Worker/Return to Work Representative

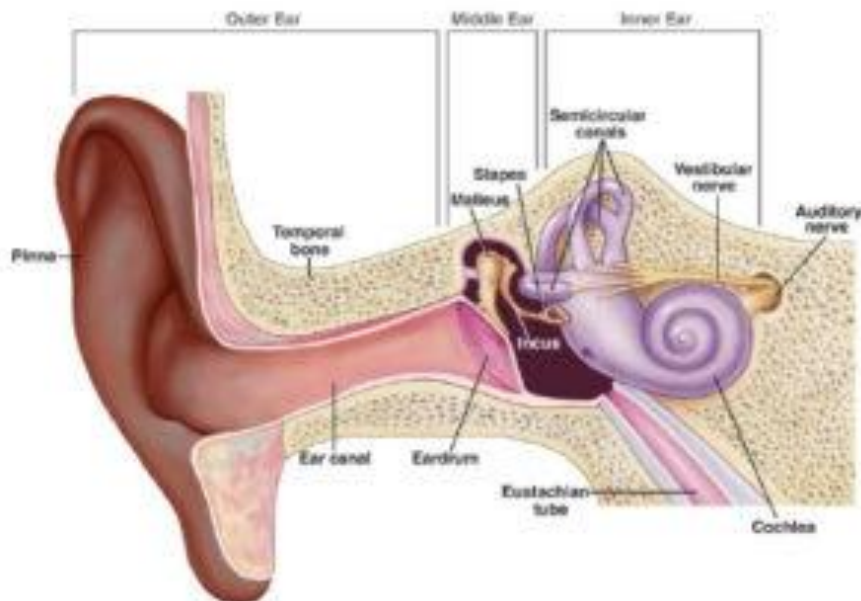
Happy Spring!!

I am going to talk a little preventative care for hearing loss. Sound can be extremely harmful when at a too high a frequency and when experiencing this over a long period of time could be harmful for members. I know many work in jobs within the school that have loud classrooms, shops in the high school, a kindergarten room with 27 plus students or a class where one student is screaming (the only way they communicate-no fault to the student).

We as staff need to start from ground zero with hearing, we need to have a baseline. If you are working in a classroom, such as above and you do believe this is affecting your hearing check in with your doctor and ask for a hearing test, this will give you a baseline.

There are some apps you can download to see what your classroom may be at, log SPL or SPL Meter to name only a couple.

Any questions please contact me and I will help you with the process.





CLASSROOM SUPPORT REPORT

By Angela Parks-Gibson, Classroom Support Steward

Hello all,

Happy Spring. April is the beginning of Healthier Minds/Stress Awareness Month. I know I can't speak for all, but I can speak on my behalf. I have been affected by high stress levels and my mental health struggled this school year. I would like to empathize and acknowledge that I can't be the only one, and I am not alone. I cannot say it enough. We need to learn to be kind to our minds. We need to learn how to lower our stress.

I had the privilege of attending the 2024 OSBCU conference and was a voting delegate on your behalf. I also had a great experience of attending an education session on Combating Hate through Education. I want everyone to know you have the right to a safe workplace or workstation or environment. You can protect your rights by speaking out. Remember you are not alone.

As your classroom support steward, I am proud to represent you. Please never hesitate to reach out to me. No question goes unanswered.



ONTARIO SCHOOL BOARD COUNCIL OF UNIONS CONVENTION - March, 2024 – Toronto

By Nancy Ripley, WSIB/Injured Worker/RTW Representative



Thank you to the Executive team for sending me to the 2024 OSBCU Convention. Where do I begin, we have a new OSBCU President, Joe Tigani. As well as a turnover of almost a whole new executive team to lead us for the next 3 years. We had many guest speakers over the week, Mark Hancock, Candice Rennick, Fred Hahn, Steven Seaburn, and a guest speaker from Quebec Local 1340, Michelle Poulin to name a few. Over the 5 days we passed the Treasurer's report, the new OSBCU Action Plan, some new resolutions, bylaws, and had area elections.

Steven Seaburn, from the Retiree's Network, talked about how important our Local retirees are. He said that they can be a great asset when we need some activists, that they could be ones that will help us when we need members to mobilize, we should have them attend some of our meetings to keep them involved. He also suggested that all 55,000 members need to keep the retirees on our mailing lists to keep them up to date with how their co-workers are doing.

One speaker who really hit home for most in the crowd was Michelle Poulin! In her introduction about herself she shared a conversation with her daughter about coming to our convention and that it was to be in Toronto and it would be in English. She said that her daughter didn't want to be embarrassed by her Mom's English skills. Michelle's English was excellent, although she did complete her speech in French where we had translation devices to help us understand her message. Michelle took what OSBCU's 55,000 members did in 2022, when we walked off the job and defeated Bill #128.

Michelle led the health care and education workers in a similar strike where she took our OSBCU mobilization's direction of having face-to-face conversations. 100,000 members, family, community members, and all sectors all walked together to show their government what they could do when they collectively worked together. Her enthusiasm and energy portrayed the success they had.

Lastly, all CUPE 5678 members, family and friends need to be thinking about the next election in the coming months and how it may affect us going forward. There will be lots of propaganda about each candidate and their promises to the people of Ontario that we should all take a hard look at before we head to the polls. We are also only 2 years away from our collective agreement ending, we will need to make sure that the promises they offer help every one of us. Most of us are living paycheck to paycheck and could be one paycheck away from poverty.

GRIEVANCE CORNER

By Sheena Hagerman, Chief Steward



What is a grievance?

A grievance is any difference arising out of the interpretation, application, administration, or alleged violation of the collective agreement or the employment standards act.

How is a grievance filed?

1. **Notify manager of alleged violation in writing**, if done verbally, follow it up with an email about the conversation, if not resolved;
2. Email or call your classification steward, if not resolved;
3. Email: Chief Steward: sheena.hagerman@cupe5678.ca or call 613-342-0434 ext. 2;
4. Chief Steward will then speak to HR regarding the issue, if not resolved;
5. Grievance is written by Chief Steward in consultation with President and National CUPE Staff;
6. Grievance sent to member to be signed and sent back to Chief Steward;
7. Grievance submitted to HR, depending on type of grievance (individual-Step 1, group or policy-Step 2);
8. HR responds to union, if not resolved;
9. HR and Union, along with the grievor-if they have information to present, conduct a step 2 meeting where the grievance information and any proof is submitted and a back and forth conversation is had;
10. HR responds, if not resolved;
11. Grievance is brought to the local executive and in consultation with the National CUPE Staff a decision is made on whether to send it to arbitration or to withdraw it, if sent;
12. HR and Union choose an arbitrator and send grievance to the arbitrator;
13. Arbitrator picks a date to hear the case (usually a 1-2 year waiting period) and sends a fee schedule to HR and Union;
14. HR and Union, along with the grievor-if they have information to present, meet with the arbitrator where both present their arguments, our National CUPE Staff presents on our behalf, arbitrator mediates a resolution or gives a ruling, resolution given. An arbitrator's ruling is final.



AGENDA

General Membership Meeting Saturday, April 20th, 2024 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In Person- Russell High School,
982 North Russell Road, Russell, ON K4R 1C8

Virtual-TEAMS Meeting : email will be sent to CUPE emails. When you register for the meeting, you will receive an email *"You're registered for Membership/Special Membership Meeting"* Click on the link to join.

1. Acknowledgment of Indigenous territory
2. Roll call of officers
3. Reading of the Equality Statement
4. Voting on new members and initiation
5. Reading of the minutes
6. Matters arising from the minutes
7. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
 - February 14, 2024 Audit
8. Communications and bills
9. Executive Committee Report
10. Reports of committees and delegates
11. Nominations, elections, or installations
12. Unfinished business
13. New business
 -
14. Good of the Union
 - Membership Engagement Draw \$1,800.00 (Must be in attendance)
 - Member in Attendance Draw \$100.00
15. Adjournment