



CUPE CONNECTION

Winter 2026

**Happy New
Year. Welcome
to 2026**

REMINDERS

General Membership Meeting (GMM)

January 10, 2026

10am – 12pm at

South Grenville DHS –
1000 Edward St, Prescott.

If you can not attend the **GMM** in person on **January 10th**, don't forget you can attend virtually via a TEAMS meeting. When you register for the meeting, you will receive an email *"You're registered"* and a *TEAMS meeting link* will be sent directly to your email

Upcoming By-Election for two Education Vice - Presidents.

Nominations are accepted from January 5 to January 26th, 2026

Electronic voting Feb 16 to Feb 18, 2026.

The Nomination form can be found on Page 6 of the newsletter.

A Message from Your New CUPE 5678 / 5678-1 President



I am honoured and grateful to serve as the new President of CUPE 5678 and 5678-1. I want to begin by sincerely thanking the membership for the confidence you showed in me through your vote. It is a responsibility I do not take lightly, and I am committed to working hard on behalf of every member.

December has been a busy first month in this role, filled with learning curves and new responsibilities. Stepping into the presidency has required a great deal of time spent understanding ongoing issues, meeting with union leadership, and responding to member concerns. I appreciate everyone's patience as I continue to learn and grow in this position. One of my top priorities is improving response times and communication, so members feel heard, supported, and informed.

As we look ahead, preparation for upcoming bargaining is already underway. There is no question that this will be a tough round of negotiations, and it will require focus, unity, and strong advocacy. I am committed to ensuring that we approach bargaining well-prepared and with the best interests of our members at the forefront. Your support, engagement, and solidarity will be essential as we move through this process together.

Once again, thank you for placing your trust in me. I am proud to serve as your President and look forward to working alongside you as we face the challenges and opportunities ahead. Together, we will continue to strengthen our union and stand up for the rights and working conditions we deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jacob Casselman".

Jacob Casselman

President CUPE 5678/5678-1

A UNION IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS ACTIVE MEMBERS.

We need 35 members including the Executive to achieve quorum at a General Membership Meeting (GMM) to conduct business, as stated in our By Laws.

We **did not** have quorum at the October 18th GMM.

Please try and attend and encourage your co-workers to also attend **the January 10th GMM at South Grenville DHS.**

Ontario Education Support Workers Collective Agreements expire August 31, 2026.

CUPE and OSBCU (Ontario School Board Council of Unions) are working hard. OSBCU Bargaining Priorities were posted Nov 12, 2025. You can view them from this link.

<https://osbcu.ca/2025/11/12/osbcu-bargaining-priorities-cscso-priorites-de-negotiation/>

Handling Complaints or Questions - Escalation Process

Manager or Supervisor/ Ask HR

- 1st step is to have a conversation with your manager or supervisor to see if issue can be resolved.
- If you think your issue could be resolved by HR, please send a ticket into AskHR@ucdsb.on.ca to see their response.



Steward

- If your issue couldn't be resolved with your supervisor or manager, you can escalate your concern to your Steward.
- The Stewards of each job classification have specific knowledge in their fields. They also have the guidance of the Chief Steward and can ask a VP for assistance.



Chief Steward

- If the Steward of the group cannot resolve the issue or needs further assistance the Chief Steward may be asked to step in.
- The Chief Steward can address the issue with HR or file a grievance if necessary.



President

- If you have escalated your concerns through all the channels and still haven't received an appropriate response, the matter should now be escalated to the President.
- The President can address the concerns with HR and escalate the action as deemed appropriate.

THANK YOU

OMERS - Ontario Municipal Employees' Retirement System

In early November, the [OMERS Governance Review](#) was made public and its recommendations came as very good news to CUPE members in the plan. Above is a link the review.

CUPE Ontario and its members, together undertook a campaign to ensure our voices were heard at OMERS.

Some of you may have added your name to CUPE Ontario's review submission from the link on the Ontario CUPE website. More than **60,000 members names** supported our demands for change and accountability at OMERS.

Thank you for your support.

CUPE's 32nd biennial National Convention at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre October 6 – 10, 2025



Members of CUPE 5678 attended the CUPE National Convention in Toronto this past fall. CUPE **National President Mark Hancock** opened convention with a rousing call to action: keep rising, keep organizing, and keep making history.

CUPE **National Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick** brought a clear and inspiring message to convention: in the face of rising threats to workers, CUPE is strong financially, the membership is growing nationally. CUPE is Canada's largest union and has just recently reached 800,000 members nationally.

So, what happens at National Conventions? Lots.

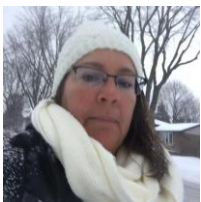
- **Elections** - Mark Hancock and Candace Rennick were acclaimed in their respective roles of National President and National Secretary-Treasurer. The General Vice-President representing Ontario has a new officer, Dawn Bellerose.
- **Reports** - National President and National Secretary-Treasurer reports were presented and delegates had an opportunity to ask questions.
- **Committee and Working Group Reports** – CUPE National has 18 committees and working groups, and each committee presented a report, and the floor was open to questions and answers. More information can be found on the CUPE National Website at <https://cupe.ca/our-committees-and-working-groups>
- **Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions** suggested changes / additions / deletions were presented, debated and voted on by the delegates in attendance.
- **Sector meetings** – Our sector is Education, and we had the opportunity to met with other education support workers (ESW) from across Canada.



Sheila Robertson provided these notes from the Education Sector Caucus.

- Before the official start of CUPE National's 32nd convention, the Education Sector Caucus brought together education workers from across Canada for a powerful and unifying gathering. Representatives from all provinces shared updates and perspectives, with a clear and consistent message emerging: education workers must be recognized and valued for the critical work we do.
- Key topics of discussion included central bargaining priorities, the ongoing issue of chronic underfunding, concerns around Bill 133, and cost-sharing opportunities. A strong emphasis was also placed on workplace safety. Delegates made it clear, violence in the workplace is not part of the job. While every child has the right to an education, that right must not come at the expense of the safety and well-being of education workers.

It is really important that our local attends the National Convention, as our participation in the elections and voting on important constitutional amendments and resolutions help shape our union.



WSIB/Injured Worker/Return to Work Representative – Nancy Ripley

Happy New Year to everyone. The winter is upon us now and the driveways, sidewalks and school yards are slippery and uneven. To prevent any injuries please ensure you are wearing your Yack Tracks provided to you by the UCDSB just ask your principal or supervisor. If you are injured remember to fill out the online incident reports on Insite

along with WSIB form 6- making copies of this is and having them at home is much easier as you can do these at home, but the incident reports can only be filled out at school.

Reminder: inform **David James at 613-930-0033 (East)** or **Nancy Ripley 613-349-0922 (West)** if you have been injured at work as only the UCDSB, Patti McNamee(East) or Robb Bowman (West) receive the information and this is not always passed along to us, so we are able to help you in an injury/accident at work.

DON'T FORGET the General Membership Meeting on January 10th at South Grenville DHS in Prescott from 10am – 12pm.

If you cannot attend in person, remember you can attend via **TEAMS**.

You will need to register before the meeting. Once you do that, you will receive a link *to the TEAMS meeting sent directly to your email.*

You need to be a **Member in Good Standing to attend**, as per the **CUPE** National Constitution. Instructions to apply are included in the registration email. This should also be done days before the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you!



CUPE 5678 Facebook Page Update

We've now created a brand-new page so we can stay connected and continue sharing updates with you.

Thank you for your continued support. We appreciate you taking a moment to follow us again.

You can check it out by clicking on this link below.

[Facebook link CUPE 5678/5678-1](#)

CUPE 5678 By-Election to Executive Committee

Two (2) CUPE 5678 Education Vice President positions became vacant December 1st 2025.

Notice of By-Election



Please refer to CUPE 5678 Bylaws – Section 11 Nomination, Election, Campaigning and Installation of Officers.

The Bylaws are on the CUPE 5678 website.

Nominator & Nominee MUST BE Members in Good Standing.

To run in the election, **you must be nominated.**

Nominations Open ... **Mon. January 5th, 2026.**

Nominations Close...**Mon. January 26th, 2026 @ 11:00 pm** (strictly adhered to)

The election is held by electronic voting from **Mon. February 16th to Wed.**

February 18th, 2026, 11:00 pm



What is a Communication Action Team (CAT)?

A CAT is a team of CUPE members representatives from each work site.

This team is responsible for communicating directly with other CUPE members in their work sites to ensure they are fully informed about upcoming collective bargaining.

CUPE education workers are at a breaking point due to overwork, workplace violence, and burnout. Student and school needs have been consistently unmet due to the understaffing crisis. Funding investments are desperately needed to ensure much higher levels of support staff in all classifications.

As your central bargaining committee prepares for negotiations, the work begins now to build member power behind each proposal to improve our lives and students' lives.

A Communication Action Team (CAT) is crucial for building negotiating power.

A CAT also helps to bust myths and misconceptions from the employer, as well as address tactics intended to divide and weaken workers during negotiations.

The CAT has the pulse of members in the workplace and supports maximum union solidarity and power.

What are the responsibilities of a CAT member?

The work of the CAT is developed through teamwork as the campaign progresses.

Typical tasks include:

- Have one-on-one conversations with coworkers.
- Take notes and track progress on member participation level.
- Input information into shared spreadsheets.
- Attend team meetings and occasional organizing training sessions.



Message from Health and Safety Representative
Shelley Swerdfeger *Workplace Safety*

When you go to a friend's house and get bit or scratched by their cat or dog, you would go to the hospital to get checked and fill out reports and those reports would trigger an investigation with the Health Unit and the Local By-Law officer.

So why is it when our members want to fill out incident reports, some of our administrators are telling them not to fill out reports when children are kicking, spiting, biting and hitting our workers.

No one ever says not to go the hospital for an animal incident, so why are we not as concerned of infection by a child. You never know where their hands were or the last time they were cleansed before you were attacked.

People are also saying that filling out these reports does not get extra help in the building! No this does not mean an EA will be hired but sometimes emergency EA hours get added to the building for some of these out-of-control students. Is that not EXTRA HELP!

And, when a violent incident happens why are our ISSW's not being contacted to talk about a new game plan for these students because the last plan is not working and our Behaviourist SSP not being brought in because clearly, we do not have a good grip on this situation.

And to follow that. Our WSIB specialist would prefer to see incident/injuries being done even if they are not medically treated the day of the attack because if you go to the Doctor or hospital and fill out WSIB report a few days later the board is questioned why paperwork was not completed at the time of the incident.

The School Boards reply to WSIB is in our Vector training, that all staff do at the beginning of the school year, in the Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention section and they are told to complete these if any incident occurs.

The incident reports are also for all workers that if you twist wrong, slip on something or just roll your ankle, fill it out that way it cannot be said you did it at home.

With that being said: Now you have a problem at work the first thing you do is Email you administrator to start a paper trail. In that email state your concerns and if you administrator comes to talk to you in the hallway about your email, PLEASE email them back with the conversation and any of your additional concerns.

If the problem continues and you are receiving no help, then you can take the following steps to a Work Refusal. Remember there must be a paper trail to start the process.

If the problem continues and you are receiving no help, then you can contact you steward on information on a Work Refusal.



Are you retiring?

Please let us know.

Email communicationscommitttee@cupe5678.ca



Executive Council By-Election

NOMINATION FORM

For the term of February 20, 2026 – November 30, 2027

I, _____ hereby nominate _____

(Nominator – please print)

(Name of Nominee – please print)

with a job classification of _____ and works at _____

(Job Classification - please print)

(Worksite – please print)

Nominator & Nominee MUST BE Members in Good Standing. It is your responsibility to verify prior to submission. Member in Good Standing list can be found on www.cupe5678.ca

to the Position of: [CHECK ONE]



for the term February 20th, 2026 to November 30th, 2027

****☐ Vice-President Education {two positions}**

(Open to and voted by the membership of the Education Unit)

Nominations shall be received on the official CUPE 5678 Nomination Form with the member's consent in writing, duly witnessed by the nominator. Read the CUPE 5678 By-Laws for more information regarding elections. No Forms will be accepted after close of nominations. Nominations must be sent to returning.officer@cupe5678.ca with a READ RECEIPT. Electronic voting during Election period.

Nominations Open... Mon. January 5th 2026

Nominations Close... Mon. January 26th, 2026 @ 11:00 p.m. (strictly adhered to)

Nominations Confirmed (with campaign procedures)... Tues. January 27th, 2026 by 6:00 p.m.

Nomination Results... Wed. January 28th, 2026

Campaigning material to returning.officer@cupe5678.ca in PDF format to be submitted with a READ RECEIPT for approval by 4 pm. Fri. Jan. 30th, 2026. Confirmation of campaign material approval by 4 pm Sun. Feb. 1st. Campaigning commences Mon. Feb 2nd, 2026.

Electronic Election/Voting Period... Mon. February 16th to Wed. February 18th, 2026 11:00 pm

Voting Results... Thurs., February 19th, 2026

Elected & Acclaimed members assume their respective term Friday February 20th, 2026

I hereby consent to let my name stand for the position nominated:

Signature of Nominee:_____ Date:_____

Nominee email:_____ Nominee phone:_____

Signature of Nominator:_____

*e-mail Nomination WITH A READ RECEIPT to returning.officer@cupe5678.ca
no later than 11:00 pm Mon. January 26, 2026*

Office Use: Date Received: _____ Time Received: _____ Confirmation of Receipt/Acceptance: _____



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, STEWARDS, REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES

Term * December 1st, 2025 to November 2028 Term ** December 1st, 2024 to November 2027

2495 Parkedale Ave., Unit 3B, Brockville, ON K6V 3H2, 1-877-342-2873 www.cupe5678.ca

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (7)		
President:	Jacob Casselman * Jacob.casselmann@cupe5678.ca	Courier - Full Time Release- 12 months (613) 342-0434 CUPE Office, Brockville (613) 246-7031 Cell
Education Vice-President	Vacant **	
Education Vice-President	Vacant **	
Transportation Vice-Pres. (Unit 5678-1/ STEO)	Carrie Laflamme * Carrie.laflamme@cupe5678.ca	GIS Administrator Student Transp. of Eastern Ontario, Prescott
Secretary-Treasurer	Sheila Robertson ** Sheila.robertson@cupe5678.ca	Secondary Office Administrator - Full Time Release- 12 months (613) 342-0434 CUPE Office, Brockville
Recording Secretary	Lorrie Somerville * Lorrie.somerville@cupe5678.ca	Educational Assistant Lyn Public School, Lyn
Chief Steward	Sheena Hagerman ** Sheena.hagerman@cupe5678.ca	Itinerant Student Support Worker - 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	Transportation Planner Student Transp. of Eastern Ontario, Prescott
Steward -T.R. Leger/Alternative Ed	Tammy Cooper ** Tammy.cooper@cupe5678.ca	Instructional Assistant - Academic T.R. Leger, Cornwall
Steward – Classroom Support	Angela Parks-Gibson * Angela.parks-gibson@cupe5678.ca	Educational Assistant Nationview Public School, South Mountain
Steward – Facilities & IT Services	Heather Adams * heather.adams@cupe5678.ca	Lead Custodian Cornwall Collegiate & Vocational School
Steward – Office/Clerical	Karen Gallagher ** Karen.gallagher@cupe5678.ca	Elementary Office Administrator Vanier Public School, Brockville
REPRESENTATIVES (3)		
Representative – Health & Safety	Shelley Swerdfeger* Shelley.swerdfeger@cupe5678.ca	Lead Custodian South Edwardsburg Public Sch., Johnstown
Representative – 1st WSIB/Injured Worker/RTW	Nancy Ripley * Nancy.ripley@cupe5678.ca	Registered Early Childhood Educator Vanier Public School, Brockville
Representative – 2nd WSIB/Injured Worker/RTW	David James ** David.james@cupe5678.ca	Educational Assistant Tagwi SS, Avonmore
TRUSTEES (3)		
Trustee (Term to 2027) #2	Julia Gauthier Julia.gauthier@cupe5678.ca	Financial Assistant Thousand Islands S.S., Brockville
Trustee (Term to 2026) #1	Elsie Day Elsie.day@cupe5678.ca	Casual (RETIRED)
Trustee (Term to 2028) #3	Shelly Crowe Shelly.crowe@cupe5678.ca	Secondary Off. Administrator Gananoque Sec. School



AGENDA

General Membership Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In Person- South Grenville District High School

1000 Edward Street North, Prescott ON K0E 1T0

Virtual-TEAMS Meeting - You need to register for the meeting.

[Link to Register GMM Jan 10 2026](#)

After you register you will receive an email "You're Registered".

You can join from this email or from the Teams calendar.

Only Members in Good Standing can attend and vote at union meetings.

Forms can be found on our website [Member in Good Standing - CUPE 5678](#) and emailed to info@cupe5678.ca

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. Cost Share
8. Secretary-Treasurer's Report – 2026 Budget
9. Communications and bills
10. Executive Committee Report
11. Reports of committees and delegates
12. Nominations, elections, or installations
13. Unfinished business
14. New business
15. Good of the Union
 - CUPE Swag Draw
16. Adjournment