

General Membership Meeting Minutes
CUPE 2357
October 1, 2025
CUPE 503

In Attendance: Julie Vilon-Bertrand, Heidi Maglaras, Anjelika Raymer, Jess Oakman, Nicole Lavigne, Melinda Lavoie, Sarah Bourgoin, Lisa Eagen, Tori Murray, Francine Meledoro, Natalie McLeod, Kathy Roebuck, Merling Mendoza, Gudrun Desjardins, Colinda Lavallee, Sue Clement, Cathy Heer, Lilly Samuel, Bernadette Sevilla, Kristin Harris, Lily Bernard, Jennifer Doherty, Lisa McDonald, Shawn Neeson, Jessica O'Leary, Jill O'Malley, Shannon Munro, Lisa Gordon, Gina Gustaferrri, Ann-Marie Haley, Martha Ortega Santos, Jennifer Young, Maureen Rogerson, Patricia Walsh, Wendy Hache, Megan Werba, Erin Zeleny, Crystal Francis, Kate Buckham, Lorraine Cook, Karen Smith, Noreen Qureshi, Daniella Ellis, Julia Derrick, Simon Ghiorgis, Kirsten Hanes, Kim Sadler, Sarah Hong, Catherine Iverson, Eureka Desrochers, Rosemarie Grieb, Lisa Marcantonio, Andrea Rossignol, Halima Desilva, Lacey Churchill, Kristine Coates, Behnaz Bahrami, Madison Jones, Rebecca Froats, Carolyn Thompson, Tracy Thompson, Cynthia Steeves, Andrea Stevenson, Leslie LaRose, Jason Sedlar, Joanne Howell, Kristen Fulton, Nicole Holmes, Jennifer Flejszon, Brenda Sweeney, Gloria Braimah, Marcie O'Connor, Kristen Ahronson, Lisa Drouin, Cindy-Lee Frost, Jennifer Forbes, Victoria Anstett, Elizabeth King, Anne-Marie Froeber, Melanie O'Rourke, Leah Sheridan, Ghada Al-Shiekh, Antonietta Crea, Chantal Malboeuf, Clara Winer, Kelly Ketel, Fatemeh Zamanpour, Cynthia Graham, Melissa Oppedisano, Sarah Joy, Brandon Rosien, Rose Asanji, Alexis Ready, Heather Fortin, Tina Rousseau-Dedo, Andrew Thomas, Tyler Chapman

Call to Order:

6:43 P.M.

Roll Call of Officers:

Cynthia Steeves. - President
Joanne Howell. - 1st Vice President
Francine Meledoro. - 2nd Vice President
Nicole Lavigne - Interim Recording Secretary
Vacant - Secretary Treasurer

Ancestral Land Acknowledgement: Read by - Joanne Howell

Reading of the Equality Statement Read by Members at Large

Voting on New Members and Initiation: Read the Oath of Membership

- Martha Ortega (EA)
- Gina Gustaferrri (RECE)
- Lisa MacDonald (RECE)
- Tina Rousseau-Dedo (RECE)

Reading of Minutes from Previous Meeting: Presented by Nicole Lavigne

Motion: To approve the minutes as presented. Nicole Lavigne
2nd: Jennifer Forbes
Motion Carried.

Matters Arising: None

Secretary-Treasurer's Report: Presented by Joanne Howell (Financial information has been redacted. Members can contact the Executive Board for this information.)

Current Bank Balances

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Everyday Account (Main)	\$\$\$\$\$
GIC (Strike Fund)	\$\$\$\$\$
GIC Holdings (as per Bylaws, monthly	\$\$\$\$\$
OTIP partnership account	\$\$\$\$\$
Business Investor Account (Security hold for union Visa's) * mandatory by bank*	\$\$\$\$\$

Local's Financial Stability

The local's funds are in good order and we are in a healthy financial position. The GIC (Strike Fund) matures on December 31st it is accruing a compound annual interest of 3.75%, at maturity the GIC (Strike Fund) will be \$\$ with interest earned and the GIC holdings as mentioned above added to it. The local will gain further stability this year with increased staffing added which brings in union dues and our grievance files where we had legal retained, are now being resolved.

Budget Considerations

We are currently updating the budget to reflect anticipated cost increases due to rising inflation, increased salaries as of September 1st, operating costs and the final half of the Bill 124 salary payments to the employer, which is \$\$\$

We expect that an increase to the annual budget for 2026 will be necessary to accommodate these costs. The budget will be presented to the membership at our November GMM.

Following the completion of bargaining, we anticipate a dues increase. Our local currently has one of the lowest dues rates at 1.5% for the size of our membership which is 3,200 members. According to the CUPE National Constitution, the maximum dues that can be deducted is 2.5%. While this change is not being anticipated until 2027, we wanted to make you aware of it in advance. This process is done through a bylaw amendment and needs a 2/3 majority vote at a GMM to pass and be in effect.

Motion - To approve the treasurers report as presented. Joanne Howell
2nd - Jess Oakman
Motion Carried

Communications: Presented by Nicole Lavigne

- Rally at Queens Park for Education Sector - Saturday October 4th
- CUPE National Convention Oct 6th 10th
- Call for Leadership Conference Nov 7th-9th (Toronto)

Executive Committee Report: Presented Cynthia Steeves

Welcome back to another school year. We hope you have been settling in nicely and we want to take this moment to acknowledge the struggles we are still facing in the Education sector, that is already greatly affecting our members. We depend on you the members to come forward and report CA violations. For example, nobody should be going without lunch or breaks due to short staffing. If you have a concern, reach out to us, and we can discuss it and if warranted, we place it on the agenda for a LMM.

The start to the school year has been exceptionally busy with the Executive Board engaged in numerous meetings, addressing daily issues, finalizing EarlyOn Bargaining, and starting to prepare for Local bargaining. Significant time has also been dedicated to resolving ongoing payroll and health benefit issues.

We are currently experiencing a high volume of Step 1 grievances, and several grievances are slated for arbitration. While the relationship between the employer and the union remains contentious at times, we are committed to finding amicable remedies and pathways forward where possible.

To ensure member input is central to our efforts, the Local bargaining survey will launch this Friday. Our Member mobilizer will be visiting schools and after Thanksgiving our stewards will join in on school visits to encourage maximum member participation in this vital survey. Your voice matters, and your feedback is crucial as we move forward with bargaining preparations.

Next week the CUPE Exec board will be in Toronto for the bi-annual CUPE National Convention, the office will remain open with members being serviced as usual.

Motion: To adopt the Executive Report as presented. Cynthia Steeves

Discussion on the motion- None

Secunder Jill O'Malley

All in favour of adopting the Executive Report as presented: All

All opposed: 0

Motion Carried.

Reports of Committees and Delegates

Grievance Report - Presented by Cynthia Steeves

Open Grievances

- Duty to Accommodate
 - 1st VP had a meeting to discuss RTW and has been placed in role with accommodations..
- Job Posting - (Step 2 - going to Arbitration)
 - Past practice, the role has not been backfilled.
- Communication/Date Request/Staffing - Policy (37 unqualified to qualified +mandatory training)
 - Received response and it was denied. Grievance meeting held Sept 30 2025
- Central C6 g. - Refreshing Sick Leave (Memo)
 - Cynthia sent out a form to get a list of people affected.
 - The employer is denying they are doing it. A meeting was held yesterday to discuss and asked what we want.
 - The union wants the employer to make any affected members whole.
 - The union agreed to compile a list of members potentially affected and reconvene another meeting with the employer.
 - Ongoing concern, so communicate with the executive if you were on leave after 2022 and were affected so it can be investigated.
- JE TOR- Office Clerks
 - Grievance was withdrawn.
- Job Descriptions/Job Evaluation (Step 1)- In regards to various bargaining unit positions.

Grievance Arbitrations -

- Tutor -Waiting on Arbitrator decision.
- FAE Frequency- Arbitration date set - July 7th, 2027
- SEL/Mental Health Worker - October 17th, November 28th and December 3rd 2025
- Discrimination - MOS amended for OT services
- Discipline Process- Arbitration scheduled for May 21st, 2026
- Job Posting - Arbitration scheduled for March 4th, 2026 (Arbitrator Jewitt)
- Good Shepherd (Group) - Violence - Arbitration scheduled for September 1st, 2026

- Admin (Comms.Dept.) - Arbitration scheduled for June 17th, 2026 (Arbitrator Archana Mathews)
- Summer School Admin Assistant & Con Ed Admin Assistant - Arbitration scheduled for May 5th, 2026
- PSW - EDP Program - Arbitration scheduled for April 8th, 2026

Motion: To accept the Grievance Report as Presented: Cynthia Steeves

2nd - Heidi Maglares

All in Favour - All

All Opposed - 0

Motion Carried

Steward Report - Presented by Francine Meledoro

The Stewards have been extremely busy with members' questions and concerns. Just a reminder that while you may contact them during the day, they are still working and most of their communications are done in the evening and weekend. As the Executive is extremely busy, we will sometimes forward your email to a Steward; it might not always be the Steward for your school but we try to filter the emails to the correct one.

Some of the questions and concerns that have been raised:

- Vacation
- Supervision
- Breaks/lunch time
- Maternity leave
- Violence
- Vaccines
- Hours of work
- RECE lieu time

We are currently down to 4 Stewards due to various leaves and members moving on to other obligations.. Jess Oakman, Tori Murray, Melissa Oppedisano and Nicole Lavigne. I have posted on the wall a list of the schools and the Steward assigned to it. Please note that some schools will be shuffled in the coming weeks as I currently have 2 others taking the Steward training. Once they have been assigned their schools they will be emailing the Site lead for that school with the change. As mentioned before, if you feel more comfortable reaching out to a Steward that is not assigned to your school that is ok.

The Executive is extremely busy, so please make an effort to reach out to your Steward first. If the Steward feels that the matter needs to be raised up to the Executive, they will contact me.

Parent Council

- We are asking that the school site leads sit on their school parent council.

- In accordance with the board policy as well as council bylaws and constitutions, the notice for this seat should be mentioned along with all other seats that are to be filled at the September meeting.
- The support staff representative position can be shared.
- This position votes on matters presented at the council meeting.
- As a member of the council you are there to bring the perspective of the support staff on issues that are presented, assist in identifying the impact on support staff in terms of the CA, time and resources, of the undertakings and decisions being considered by the council.
- You are also there to provide input on local and school events and activities, school budget priorities and school extra curricular activities.

The write up will be sent to all site leads to please consider and if not to please speak with the other Cupe members.

** It would be great if those CUPE members who are on their school council could email me, so that we can start a contact list.

Motion: To accept the Steward Report as presented. Francine Meledoro
 2nd - Nicole Holmes
 All in Favour - All
 All Opposed - 0
 Motion Carried

Health and Safety Report - Presented by Joanne Howell

- Health and Safety
 - Violent incident reports are coming in.
 - Sick leave letters have also been received.
 - We have received a list of JHSC members at each school.
- RTW Meetings
 - Francine attended some meetings at the beginning of the month. I have attended numerous meetings for both WSIB as well as accommodation meetings.
 - Things are changing in the Wellness department. The officers in this department will be supporting members by family of schools now instead of by groups (CUPE, OECTA, Unite Here)
 - Attended a workshop on Mental Health and speaking with members around this at the Ottawa Area CUPE office on September 15, 2025.
- 1st VP Report
 - I have attended a few meetings at schools this month.
 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - kindergarten issues as well as safety issues
 - St. FX - issues involving 1 student in particular and safety concerns.
 - St. Juan Diego - meeting with team around safety concerns

Motion: To accept the Health and Safety Report as presented. Joanne Howell
 2nd - Kristen Fulton
 All in Favour - All

All Opposed - 0
Motion Carried

- A discussion was had in regards to a principal's ability to read the Violent Incident Forms to the parent of the child involved. The member was advised to speak to J. Howell after the meeting to discuss details further. C. Steeves will inquire with D. Kealey at the next Labour Management Meeting.
- Members inquired on Safe Schools forms being completed. J. Howell informed membership that any staff member can fill them out, and should, if they witness an incident. Multiple principals are advising against it-however it is a members right to document, so continue to fill the Safe Schools forms out.

Elections, Nominations or Installations: (1st VP Installation)

Presented by the Elections Officer -

- The nominations closed on Sept 1, 2025 with no nominations for 3 year term positions of Secretary-Treasurer and Trustee
- One nomination was received for 1st VP.
- Joanne Howell has been acclaimed as 1st VP to a 3 year term and she read the Oath Of Office.
- Nominations are now open again for 3 year Trustee and Secretary- Treasurer.
- Nominations close on October 26th at 4pm.
- Send completed nomination forms to executive@cupe2357.com

Unfinished Business:

EarlyOn Bargaining

- The bargaining committee has made progress, and hopes by November a deal can be reached.
- Divine Infant and St. Elizabeth EarlyOn Centres have been closed.
- The employer is spending some of their budget money on these programs and are citing space issues as the reason for closures.
- When bargaining began we had 12 members, and are now down to 5.

New Business:

→ Trustee Report - Audit 2024

Trustees report to the Members - Audit for fiscal year 2024

We conducted the audit over two days this year. We would like to thank the Executive for welcoming us to the CUPE office to perform the audit for 2024. Thank you to Pattie and Joanne for organizing the documents. They were very easy to access this year.

We recommend that any new Secretary-Treasurer continues to organize the books using the current file folder method separated by month, as this made the audit this year much easier to facilitate. Going forward, providing a document to the trustees with a list of the automatic recurring payments, GIC account, retiree gratuity, honorariums, and a record

of expenses that occur outside of the fiscal year being audited should continue to be included.

Our findings on the condition of funds and accounts is good. Most of our recommendations are for more transparency and small changes to help keep the audit running smoothly going forward. There have been multiple Secretary-Treasurers in the position during 2024 so some recommendations are to put a contingency plan in place for any changes that happen.

The responses to our recommendations were positive and we thank the executive for taking on board our recommendations.

The Trustees audit report and responses are available: On the Website soon.

→ **Executive Motion - Cost Shared Campaign with CUPE National - Presented by Nicole Lavigne**

Purpose of Motion:

- To enter into a Cost Shared Campaign with CUPE National for 2025/2026

Motion Reads:

- The CUPE 2357 executive board is recommending the membership approve a Cost Shared Campaign with CUPE National for xxxxxx the cost is split 50/50 with the local's share being xxxxxx These monies would be drawn from the local's strike fund (GIC) as per our Bylaws to use these funds for Strike prep.
- The full amount for this cost share would run in two (2) cycles between October 1st, 2025 and May 1st, 2026.

- *The main message of the campaign is,*
Students and staff deserve fully staffed schools. The understaffing crisis is the result of the Ford government significantly cutting funding for Ontario's schools since it took office in 2018. CUPE-OSBCU education workers are leading the fight for students to have the resources children need in Ontario's publicly funded schools to succeed. The funding education workers are demanding what parents expect to be in place for safe and great schools. Increased government investment in public education is necessary to retain and recruit qualified CUPE education to improve working and learning conditions.

How will members be involved in the campaign?

- Member engagement is central to the campaign, as is local and member participation in mobilization actions and high-participation strike votes.

Motion: To adopt the motion as presented.

Secunder for the motion as presented - Crystal Francis

Discussion or Questions on the motion- None

All in favour - 76

All opposed: 0

Motion Carried.

→ Executive Motion - 2nd VP Book Off 2025/2026 School Year - Presented by Nicole Lavigne

Purpose of Motion:

- To continue booking off our 2nd VP (Francine Meledoro) full time for the 2025/2026 school year.

Motion Reads:

- The CUPE 2357 executive board is recommending that the membership continue to approve a full time book off for our 2nd VP to ensure that our large membership continues to be serviced in a timely manner. The core duties of the 2nd VP at this time are: Tracking FTE, Overseeing the Steward/Site Lead Portfolio, Grievance Handling, Member Meetings and assisting the President at Labour Management Meetings, plus other duties as assigned.

The funds for the salary and benefits (roughly xxxxxx) would be built into the approved yearly CUPE 2357 budget, as was done last year.

Motion: To adopt the motion as presented.

Secunder for the motion as presented - Wendy Hache

Discussion or Questions on the motion- None

All in favour - 78

Not in Favour - 0

Motion Carried.

→ Edvantage Program

- L2357 has ended their partnership with Edvantage, and are now partnering with Union Savings.

→ Union Savings Sign Up Draw

- \$1000 in prizes
- \$500 Farm Boy Gift Card, \$250 Walmart Gift Card, \$125 Dining Out Gift Card, and a \$125 Milk Jar Prize Pack.
- If you already signed up, you are already registered for the draw. Sign up before the end of the month to be entered.

→ My Absences - ATE

- Members advised to start screenshotting and printing their ATE allocations at the end of each school year as a way to ensure the employer is adhering to the CA in regards to leaves.

→ MOS - Unqualified Staff

- EA's - DSW and CYW graduates are already qualified and granted an interview.
- The MOS also indicates that another diploma or degree in another field and 2 years of consistent experience with children with exceptionalities will possibly grant the opportunity to receive an interview to be on the qualified list.
- Members were not aware that unqualified staff do not have interviews. Very concerned with the lack of training.

- Members advised to let the executive know of any qualified individuals who have not been granted an interview.
 - Discussion in regards to ratios. There are no ratios for the education sector as there are for home care.
- Job Evaluation TOR
- Going through a Job Evaluation isn't the answer and there is a risk of decrease in level, so please reach out to the executive first before doing a fact sheet.
 - If a Job Evaluation has been submitted for your classification within the last 5 years, unless there are significant changes in duties and responsibilities, it will be denied.
 - The committee meets to do the work and can make suggestions, but ultimately the senior executive makes the final decision.
- Classification Meetings
- Will all be virtual meetings.
 - Invites will be sent before each meeting.
 - Dates listed and shared with all site leads to post.
- Local Bargaining Survey
- Survey comes out October 3rd with a deadline of October 24.
 - Member Mobilizer Melissa will be reminding members to fill it out during her visits, and the stewards will be booked off after thanksgiving with tech to get it done.
 - We need high participation like we had with the Central Bargaining Survey.
 - Discuss with your CUPE coworkers the importance of filing it out.
- Member Mobilizer Position - OSBCU
- OSBCU has given us our own dedicated Mobilizer due to the size of our membership.
 - OSBCU is covering her salary - no cost to the local.
 - Main priorities are to find site leads, organize CATS, and enhance solidarity.
- Vacation Pilot Project
- In effect until the end of this year.
 - Principals are making side deals that they can't always uphold.
 - Members are only allowed to take 10 days. You will not be approved for any days before or after Christmas Break as it is already 10 days.
 - Don't book vacation until after you have received your approval.
 - Further warning of fraudulent use of sick leave - the employer has terminated multiple members due to this, so this is not an option.
- Wellness Officer - Portfolio Changes/Assignments
- No longer by union or classification. CUPE2357/UniteHere/OECTA all streamed together after changes.
 - Portfolios are now done based on the family of schools, as they want them knowing the membership and school issues better.
 - Direct emails to wellness at wellness@ocsb.ca and it will be forwarded to the correct individual.

- Unqualified Staff - Jobs ATE
 - Reminder-unqualified staff are only eligible to pick up jobs after 7:00PM.
 - In their hire letters it states this detail.
 - If they are caught picking up shifts they will be red flagged by HR.

- New Permanent Hires - Over the Summer
 - 75 members hired permanently.
 - All these members will be deemed surplus and will apply in Round 4 of the staffing process to receive their permanent school.
 - They will not be going ahead of any permanent staff looking for an increase.

- Redeployment 2025
 - 75 new bodies.
 - 62.5 Extra Full time staff. 12.5 are going to be used solely for kindergarten transitional support classes that are only going to the end of January, and then will be reassessed.
 - Principals are finding out if they are eligible and for what amount of FTE.
 - No more classes collapsed. 2 RECE's surplus and already placed.

- Bill 33 - Supporting Children and Students Act (2025)
 - "Get rid of trustees"
 - October 20, 2025 will be the second reading, and the Ford government has a majority and has been pushing things through.
 - In OCSB, trustees would still have a job, but would only be able to vote on religious issues.
 - They do not do much for us as a union, never respond to emails and openly supported Bill 28 in 2022, however we are trying to support the trustees and Joe Tigani reached out with support from OSBCU, but the trustees have no sense of urgency. Unsure why they are not alarmed.
 - What to do? Attend a board meeting and Rally for Democracy on October 14th at 6pm in front of the OCSB Board office on Hunt Club Rd.

- Parent Council at Schools
 - There has to be a CUPE member on the Health and Safety Committee and the individual holding the position should be voted on.
 - CUPE does have a seat on every Parent Council Committee (Non-Teaching Seat for an OA/RECE/EA/LT)
 - All of the site leads have been requested to hold a vote to see who they want to sit on the Parent Council. Understood it's not going to happen everywhere.
 - It can be a shared position.
 - Once your school has decided who will be the representative for CUPE on the Parent Council, email Francine Meledoro with their name to be added to the list to access the information.

- OTIP Benefits - Onboarding/Reinstatement
 - Some members are waiting 40 or more days for benefits.

- There is supposed to be a 10 day grace period before they cut benefits, but this has not been honoured in multiple cases.
 - Cynthia wrote a letter and will have an update soon.
- OTIP Issues Reporting Therapeutic Class Pricing
- As a cost saving measure they have cut multiple meds and are not covering certain brands.
 - EWBT are only covering the generic and cheapest version of the medication.
 - Advised to have this information on the front of their update documents they send out.
 - Benefits were supposed to be cut back on October 1, 2025 but have extended it to November 30th.
- Other (P.D. Day Directives)
- Oct 10th - Attend CCD or take a vacation day.
 - OA's and Custodians are the only individuals who are permitted to report to work.

Good of the Union:

Winners:

Gudrun Desjardins, Victoria Anstett, Eureka Desrochers, Jason Sedlar

Bring a Buddy Grand Prize Draw

Winners:

3rd Place - Jennifer Young, Martha Ortega, Simon Ghiorgis

2nd Place - Wendy Hache, Megan Werba

1st Place - Ann-Marie Haley, Gina Gustaferrri

Adjournment:

8:55 P.M.