



CUPE Local 520
Caretaking, Maintenance
Warehouse Staff
Calgary Catholic School Board

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March 15, 2025

To: Dr. Bryan Szumlas:

From: CUPE Local 520

Re: Correspondence from CCSD to staff and the public

On March 10, you sent a message using the CCSD's internal email (which CUPE members cannot access). Many of our teaching colleagues felt your messaging was highly inappropriate and disparaging to CUPE members and felt it was important that the union be made aware of the narrative being put forward by the chief superintendent. It is gratifying to know that the teaching staff are supporting us in our efforts to achieve fair compensation and respect in our workplace.

On March 14 our members received your "CUPE Strike Information" sheet.

In these two correspondences, statements were made that I would like to address:

In your email, you indicated that CUPE was seeking an offer of close to 30%.

- The Union's last proposal was \$3.50/hour/year for a 2-year term. This amounts to less than 12% a year, which does not total 30%.
- The cost-of-living increase over the last decade is roughly **26.7%**. Following are the increases CUPE 520 has seen over that time:
 - 2024 – 1.5% (as of February 1, 2024)
 - 2023 – 2.25% (as of September 1, 2023)
 - 2022 – 0%
 - 2021 – 0%
 - 2020 – 0%
 - 2019 – 0%
 - 2018 – 30¢
 - 2017 – 0%
 - 2016 – 0%
 - 2015 – 2%
 - 2014 – 0%
 - 2013 – 0%

This totals just over 4.75% over a decade, putting our members who are so valued by this district years behind by around 21.95% in their compensation.

The District's Offer – Some perspective

- The district's offer would leave us behind again by nearly 10%. That does not include the projected inflationary increases of between 1.8% and 2.2% per year.
- **The average increase for most members will be around 77¢ per hour over the 4 year period.** This works out to less than \$1500 per year for most members.
- 3% of your salary, benefits, allowances and expenses is over \$ 10,000 in just one year at .95 full time.
- The "other CUPE locals" who accepted this offer was actually only one local, and their compensation is greater than CCDS members.

In your "CUPE Strike Information" you identified the yearly income was between \$43,000 and \$53,700 per year, with "other positions" able to earn between \$52,500 and \$83,000 per year.

- Over 1/3 of our members are making below \$24.45 - the living wage in Calgary for a household with 2 full-time earners.
- Only 18 members make above \$58,000.
- Of those, only 5 make more than \$80,000.

You state that in 1998 CUPE Local 520 went on strike for 9 weeks and ended up settling for the offer that was on the table before they walked off the job.

- This is false and seems to be a narrative that is meant to vilify our members.
- The issue at hand in 1998 was not wages but contracting out. Our members returned after 9 long weeks of fighting for language to protect their jobs because CCSD did not want to secure our positions in the organization.
- The district continues its efforts to hire contractors to do the work of the bargaining unit, eroding our work and our income.

The district is "bound by law" to only offer 3% per year for 4 years as per the Public Sector Employers Act.

- The Act only holds the employer to the directive; however, the directive can change.
- The union has asked the employer to help us send a message to the government that education needs to be properly funded and to stand with us for better wages, like other school districts have done. CCDS has not done so.

It was addressed to non-CUPE staff and indicated everyone should pray for those of us on strike. The Union believes that if CCSD stood with our members in our plea for fair wages rather than condemning them as greedy, all our prayers would soon be answered.

Sincerely yours,


Henry Salonga Hernández
President – CUPE Loc 520