

Full steam ahead: CUPE members give OSBCC a mandate for central bargaining

The results are in and CUPE members have overwhelmingly expressed their support for participation in central bargaining as it is proposed in Bill 122, *The School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2014*.

But hold on! Hasn't everything changed? The government's been dissolved. The province is heading into an election. There could be a change of government. There isn't even a Minister of Education to designate a bargaining agent. Why are we still talking about central bargaining?

All good considerations and good questions. Here are some answers:

1. Nothing that happened on Friday, May 2 – the day that the provincial Liberal government was dissolved – changes the fact Bill 122 was enacted in April and remains law in Ontario.

Regardless of the upcoming election or which party ends up forming a government after June 12, the legislation stands.

2. The law is clear: because CUPE locals took the required votes and met the criteria of Bill 122, allowing us to represent our members in central bargaining, the government is obliged to write a regulation to provide us with a central table.
3. On Monday, May 5, we informed the Ministry of Education that we have met the threshold for a central table. Under the Act, the government **must** designate CUPE as an employee bargaining agency by issuing a regulation.
4. Once we have made that request, we will notify the school board trustees' association that we have met the threshold for a mandatory table and that our request for designation as a bargaining agent has been made to the government. The designation of a council of trustee associations to bargain with CUPE will need to be enacted by a regulation.
5. The fact an election has been called will, in all likelihood, delay the writing of the regulation.



What happened between April 27 and May 4?

All votes scheduled for last week went ahead as planned. There were 109 bargaining units that held votes on whether to participate in central bargaining. In the end, each of those 109 bargaining units authorized the OSBCC bargaining committee to negotiate at a central table on their behalf.

Coming up

We have been informed by the Ministry that no regulation has been issued for any support staff bargaining agent. Therefore, no support staff table will be starting ahead of the others.

The OSBCC bargaining committee will be meeting in the next couple of weeks to continue its work preparing proposals for bargaining.

We will be updating you regularly as additional information comes available.



Local bargaining

Local bargaining will take place once central issues are established. Any issue not dealt with centrally will be part of local bargaining. Once notice to bargain has been served centrally, local notice to bargain is deemed to have been given.

Therefore, we are asking locals **not** to file notice to bargain. However, all locals should be preparing their proposals for bargaining, so that we are in a position to move ahead together when the time comes.



OSBCC bargaining: setting the stage for success

The OSBCC has been preparing for bargaining for many months. Over that period, members have made their priorities clear:

- a) members seek to contribute to a learning environment that supports students' success and
- b) members are determined to move forward on issues of importance, like wages and benefits, job security, and health and safety.

The outcome of June's provincial election will determine the degree to which those priorities can be met. However, all members should be aware that the best way that to prepare for a successful round of bargaining is by ensuring that the Progressive Conservatives under Tim Hudak are not allowed to form a government in Ontario!

Make a difference to your future! Get involved in Ontario's provincial election!

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