



Worth Knowing SE-25 (2025 03 11)

This issue is a *Special Edition* for those Bargaining Units who currently have CUPE strikes ongoing.

WORTH KNOWING

Support for Members Dealing with CUPE Labour Action

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) has been on strike in eight school divisions across the province. In some cases, such as Fort McMurray Public and Catholic, they began rolling strike action in mid-November 2024 and started their full strike on January 7, 2025. Edmonton Public, meanwhile, has been on full strike since January 13 and is approaching week nine of the strike. While CUPE continues to stand and fight for a living wage and reasonable settlement, the lack of classroom and school support is taking its toll on teachers. This impact is felt even more by those who have been out the longest and are dealing with the effects of the Ministerial Order injunction, which has led to the implementation of rotational schedules for in-person instruction.

Teachers and school leaders are beyond exhausted. They are doing their best to deliver instruction while supporting teaching and learning conditions, but they are suffering under impossible circumstances.

The Association acknowledges the need for support among its members. Although our capacity to influence negotiations with CUPE and school divisions is limited during these

challenging times, it is important for members to be informed about the resources available to assist them.

Each situation and each experience is unique, particularly for school leaders. Therefore, the primary support is to contact Teacher Employment Services (TES). Association staff are here to assist and listen. We take the privilege of speaking with members very seriously. All calls are confidential. We provide advice on collective agreement provisions and interpretations of clauses, which may be especially helpful for school leaders. TES is knowledgeable about benefit plans and your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) and is ready to help you access support.

If you are unable to call, please review the resources below, which may help you.

- If you are in distress and suffering a mental health crisis, call or text 9-8-8. This number is available 24/7 in both English and French and is available anywhere in Canada.
- Your group health benefits, provided in your collective agreement, include resources such as psychological services and the EFAP.
 - If your group health benefits provider is ASEBP, GreenShield (formerly Inkblot) offers the EFAP (<https://org.inkblottherapy.com/asebp> or 1-855-933-0103).
 - For Calgary Public Teachers, the EFAP is TELUS Health (<https://one.telushealth.com> or 1-833-754-3702).
 - For Calgary Catholic Teachers, EFAP support is provided by the employer (information is located on the District Intranet under the Departments / Human Resources / Employee Benefits / Employee & Family Assistance Program subheading or by calling the EFAP Administrator at 403-500-2774).
 - For Fort McMurray Catholic Teachers, the EFAP is Homewood Health (<https://homewoodpathfinder.com/employee-assistance-program/> or by phone at 1-844-959-2917).
 - There are paid leave provisions in the collective agreement (sick leave and personal leave) and leave under the Alberta Employment Standards Code (up to 10 days of unpaid, job-protected leave because of violence in the home).

WORTH SHARING

CUPE has been on strike in eight school divisions across the province. They are fighting for a living wage and a reasonable settlement. However, the ongoing strike has resulted in significant classroom and school support shortages, particularly affecting teachers in more protracted strikes.

Teachers and school leaders feel overwhelmed and struggle to provide their usual professional service under these challenging conditions. The Association is here to help all members. Reach out to Teacher Employment Services (TES). TES can provide confidential advice on collective agreement provisions, benefits and access to support, including through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. In the Edmonton area, call 1-800-232-7208, and in the Calgary area, call 1-800-332-1280. If you are in crisis, please call or text 9-8-8 for assistance. Help is available. Speak with someone today. **#WeAreATA**