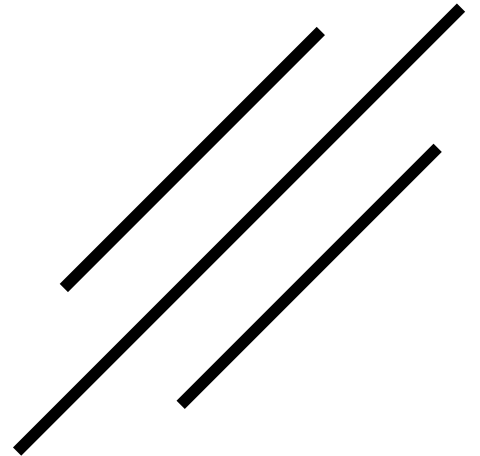
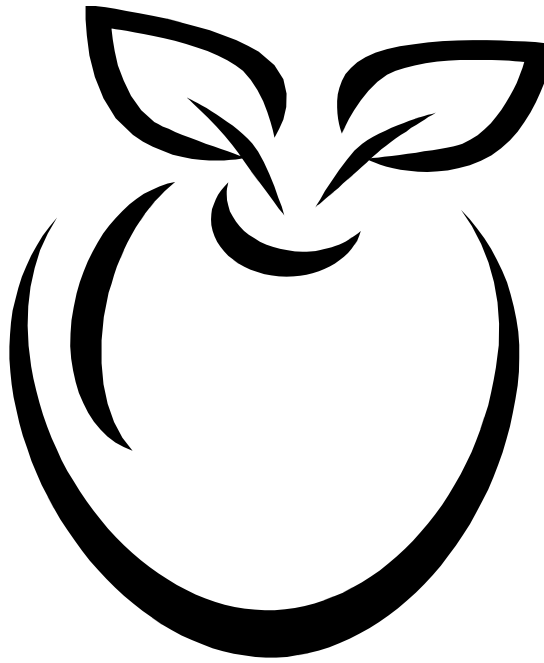


CUPE

Education Workers' Lobby Kit



Why lobby for provincial bargaining in K-12 education?

CUPE members in K-12 education:

The most effective and direct action an individual can take is to contact their elected representatives in person, by phone or in writing. Individual voters hold a great deal of power and many individuals can affect change.

In Saskatchewan, we elect the people who serve on our school division boards and the people who represent us in the Legislative Assembly.

You can find a complete listing of School Division Boards by going to: <http://www.saskschoolboards.ca/>. Just click on the school board links. To contact your MLA, see our CUPE Guide to Saskatchewan MLAs.

School division board members and our MLAs are directed by the voices of their constituents and are accountable to them. When a CUPE local lobbies an elected official, it represents the interests of many voters — that, in itself, has an enormous impact. When you lobby, you educate both the members of your local and your elected representatives.

This lobby kit will give every local the tools and resources necessary to organize a lobby in your community. This kit will give you the steps to follow when setting up a lobby and engaging the members.

Let us know when you have a meeting so that we can track how school division boards and MLAs are being lobbied through the province. Please use the reporting forms starting on page 16.

**CUPE EDUCATION WORKERS' STEERING COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE MEMBERS 2010-2011**

		Home	Work
CHAIRPERSON: (2 year term – elected on even year)	JACKIE CHRISTIANSON (L.3766) 12158 Wascana Heights REGINA, SK S4V 3B4 e-mail: jackiechristianson@myaccess.ca	790-8393 550-7227 (cell)	
VICE-CHAIRPERSON: (1 year term – elected on odd year)	OMAR MURRAY (L.4754) P.O. Box 1622 MAPLE CREEK SK SON 1NO e-mail: omar.murray@national-component.org	662-2051 662-6051 (cell)	662-3590 662-2645 665-2051 (fax)
SECRETARY-TREASURER: (1 year term – elected on odd year)	SHEILA BINDIG (L. 4799) Box 531 WADENA SK S0A 4J0 e-mail: sheilabindig@gmail.com	338-3907 338-3907 (fax)	338-2325
RECORDING-SECRETARY: (2 year term – elected on even year)	BRENDA ANDERSON (L.4195) RR#1 Site 1 Comp 36 CHRISTOPHER LAKE, SK S0J 0N0 e-mail: baamanderson@gmail.com	982-4349 961-4484 (cell)	764-5233

MEMBERS AT LARGE –TWO YEAR TERM

ELECTED ON EVEN YEAR

EARL BOOTH (L.5506) 1419 Sioux Crescent MOOSE JAW, SK S6H 7C8 e-mail: earlbooth@hotmail.com 692-8253 (home) 631-4467 (work) 631-8962 (cell)	MARIE MOORE (L.4799) Box 17, R.R. #1 BRUNO, SK S0K 0S0 e-mail : cupe 4799@hotmail.com 369-2683 (home) 369-2541 (work) 291-7338 (cell)	VACANT
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ELECTED ON ODD YEAR

GLENN DOUGLAS (L.650) 10 Stapleford Cres. REGINA, SK S4R 4S4 e-mail: puddle.guppy@hotmail.com 949-0667 (home) 791-8559(work) 526-9424 (cell)	GWEN MURPHY (L.2268) 634 Fisher Cres. SASKATOON, SK S7L 5E6 e-mail: gmurphy@gscs.sk.ca 933-0139 (home) 659-7500 (work) 260-8404 (cell)	LORI SUTHERLAND(L.4784) Box 22 TANTALLON, SK S0A 4B0 e-mail: lorisutherland@hotmail.com 643-2063 (home) 745-6618 (work) 745-7905 (cell)
STAFF ADVISORS: ELAINE EHMAN and LOIS LAMON		

**FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE OUR WEBSITE
www.saskedworkers.cupe.ca**

General guidelines for lobbying

CUPE members in Saskatchewan are a powerful lobby group. Whether we lobby as individuals or as a local, as voters in this province we make up an influential constituency.

CUPE is the largest union in Saskatchewan. Our 29,000 members work in communities across the province and contribute to the quality of life.

Even with this power, many of us are uneasy with the process of lobbying, especially if we've never done it before.

Fears About Lobbying Politicians

Many of us believe that politicians know more than we do or they wouldn't be in decision-making positions. We think we aren't articulate enough or that we'll freeze when we approach the politicians. Maybe they'll ask questions we can't answer.

Often, we forget that the politicians' job is to serve **us**. That's why they were elected to office. We forget that it's us — we the voters — who hold the power.

Experienced lobbyists will tell us that once you start meeting the politicians you'll see that they are just like everyone else. They are ordinary people who come from a variety of backgrounds. And they're always responsive to the voters—the people who can affect their future.

To address some of our fears about lobbying we just have to look at the types of groups who have had successful lobbies. The lobby formed to fight against de-indexation of pensions was started by one senior citizen and eventually expanded across the country. This lobby group was made up of average senior citizens who had credibility as lobbyists because their lives were directly affected by the de-indexation issue.

It's Not a Waste of Time

Lobbying is sometimes seen as a waste of time — that we alone can't make any difference. But if our voices aren't heard, then our opponents will be the only group to get the ear of the decision-makers. It is never a waste of time to exercise your democratic right to express your views, to become involved in the political process in your community or to organize and educate your members on issues. Your efforts could very well change the minds of government.

Strength in Numbers

The more CUPE members lobby a school board member or politician, the more power our members hold.

If one person lobbies an elected official on an issue, it is treated as an individual complaint. But, if an elected official is faced with consistent and continuous lobbying and pressure on an issue from many groups or individuals, the issue is given a higher priority.

Elected officials will bring the issue back to their school board or party caucus. The more elected officials bring that issue forward, the more successful the lobby is going to be.

Three Stages for a Successful Lobbying Campaign

A lobbying campaign should take place in three stages:

- Stage One — publicize the issue within the local and to develop support for it among the members
- Stage Two — get your lobby team together and set up the lobby
- Stage Three — lobby members of your School Division Board and your MLA.

This kit provides you with checklists and ideas for each stage of a lobby campaign.

This is the first, and most important step and should be completed **before** meeting with politicians.

You will have to develop a step-by-step strategy that takes into consideration the needs of the local membership. What do our members need to know about the importance of provincial bargaining?

Involve as many union members as possible in the lobby campaign – the more, the better. All members can play a vital role in the lobby effort by contacting members to gain further support; writing, faxing, phoning and emailing school board members and MLAs; meeting with their division board and MLA; lobby organizing, and much more.

Stage 2: Lobbying Team - Roles and Responsibilities

Pre-lobby Meeting

Once you have determined who will make up the local lobbying team, organize a pre-lobby meeting for everyone who will be visiting the politician. Practice asking and answering the questions.

Before you go into the lobby meeting, make sure the team decides:

- who will be the chief spokesperson
- who will ask each of the questions and
- who will be the Lobby Reporter?

The Lobby Reporter is responsible for filling out a Lobby Report. Write a small report after the meeting, noting anything that happened that you hadn't anticipated. This will help others who are lobbying on the same issue.

Setting up the Lobby Meeting

For some people, making the phone call to the constituency office to set up a meeting is difficult. The person who is responsible for setting up the meeting is the Constituency Assistant.

Try a few of these tips:

- As a constituent, ask for a meeting with your MLA.
- When asked the nature of the meeting, give a short and concise answer.
- If the Assistant tries to argue with you, discourage you, or even change your mind about asking for a meeting, **do not** engage in a debate or discussion.
- Advise her or him that you want to speak with your political representative in person.
- If necessary, remind her or him that as a voter you have the right to meet with your MLA.
- Press for a commitment on a date and time convenient for you.
- Follow up with the office of the MLA to ensure you obtain a meeting.
- Confirm the meeting a few days before you attend.
- If you cannot obtain a meeting, email the MLA directly or phone her or his Regina legislative office.

Remember, if you are a constituent, you have a right to meet with your local politician at her/his office. That's why it is always important to have one or more members who live in the riding to be part of the lobby your local arranges.

Face-to-Face Lobby Checklist

1. Arrange a Pre-Lobby Meeting

Members of the lobby delegation should meet prior to your meeting with your school board official or MLA to discuss what you're going to say.

2. Plan the Agenda

Decide what you want to discuss and the points you want to make. Practice making your pitch. If you are lobbying in a group, choose a spokesperson and a recorder.

3. Know Your Audience

What are the special interests of your elected politician? Do they have children in the K-12 education system? Have they ever served on a school board? Find out as much as you can about your MLA's background and interests. (See the CUPE Guide to Saskatchewan MLAs.)

It will help you determine how much they know about school support workers and the need for provincial bargaining.

Some MLAs are former teachers such as Saskatoon NDP MLAs David Forbes, and SaskParty Ken Krawetz. Others such as SaskParty MLA Rod Gantefoer was chair of the Melfort School Division Board, while MLAs Delbert Kirsch and Ken Krawetz served on their local school boards.

Some politicians will be genuinely interested, others will be preoccupied with their own interests. Try to stick to your subject. Your goal is to persuade others to support your position.

4. Know Your Subject

Speak about what you know. Anticipate questions and arguments and be prepared to respond. Don't be afraid to say you don't know the answer to some points — offer to get back with information and be sure you follow through.

5. Be Clear and Concise

Don't try to cover too much ground, confine your comments to specific issues. Explain your position, and don't assume everyone understands your point of view. Speak confidently and persuasively.

6. Be a Good Listener

Try to determine areas of agreement. Avoid arguments and don't lecture. If the school division board member or MLA favours your position, ask for help in identifying and persuading the government.

7. Leave the Door Open

Try to prevent outright rejection of your position. Emphasize your areas of agreement, not your differences.

8. Don't be Discouraged by Failure

Not every MLA will be sympathetic or supportive. Don't allow an early failure to stop you from continuing to lobby.

Pointers for the Lobby Meeting

The best way to deal with the issue when talking to a politician is to talk from your own experience as a worker. Stick to what you know.

Always offer to follow up if you're asked a question you can't answer. Then make sure you get back to the politician with the information.

Try to keep control of the meeting. Don't get sidetracked, but stick to the issue at hand.

If possible, let the politician know the scope of the lobby, how many of your members live in their constituency, and whether one or more of their constituents are present at the lobby meeting.

Enlist members who live in the constituency to arrange for their own meeting with the politician or follow up the meeting with letters and phone calls to the politician.

Know what you're going to say and exactly what you want from the politician before you go into the meeting. Do you want her or him to support policies? Do you want her or him to try to soften up other politicians?

Try to get a commitment from the politician at the end of the meeting.

Lobby Day Checklist

A. Before the Meeting

1. Meet 15 minutes before appointment time at the constituency office or at a nearby location.
2. Make sure you know who will take the lead and who will write the lobby report of the meeting afterwards.
3. Establish that, where appropriate, other lobby group members will add comments or answer questions.

B. At the Meeting

1. Introductions.
2. Statement of your position.
3. Discussion, clarification, response to questions.
4. Commitments to follow up if necessary.
5. Thank you and good-bye.
6. When your points have been made and reinforced, it's important to leave.

C. After the Meeting

1. Sit down and talk about what was said during the meeting and decide what, if any, follow-up action is required and who will do it, right away.
2. Fill out your lobby report, right away!
3. Talk to your members about the meeting. Discuss the need for provincial bargaining with other unions and organizations in your community.

D. Follow-up

1. Send a thank-you letter to the politician with any additional information you may have promised
2. Use your lobby report to identify the commitments made by the politician.
3. Follow up to ensure the politician fulfills the commitments made in your lobby meeting; e.g. introducing a petition in the legislature.
4. Track the voting record of the politician.
5. Set up another meeting if necessary.

Lobbying by Phone and Letter

Meeting face-to-face with your school board member or MLA is not the only way to lobby. You can use phone calls and letters — or emails — as ways to involve more members in the lobby campaign (you can only take so many to a meeting) and to step up the pressure.

Points to Remember for a Successful Phone Lobby

Numbers Count

Ask every one of your members to phone their school division board and MLA.

Ask each of those members to get a friend to phone.

Use a Script

Have a few members develop a script or speaking points as a guide for those doing the phoning. A script is a tool to help individuals be more comfortable with phoning. Once they get comfortable with the script, they will be able to use it as general guideline for phoning.

Speak to the Politician

If you are “screened” by the constituency assistant, leave a definite message briefly stating your views. Ask for the politician to get back to you. Follow up with another phone call.

Sample phone script

Hello, my name is

_____. I know that you met recently with members from my CUPE local. I also work at _____.

I am calling to let you know that I fully support the delegation that met with you. Provincial bargaining for education workers is long overdue.

Tell the elected politician about your job. Point out that teachers get the same wage whether they work in this community or a larger or smaller one. But school support workers don't. Ask your school board member or MLA: Where is the equity and fairness? Why is it teachers have an extended health benefit plan fully funded by the provincial government, but most school support workers don't? Ask your elected rep: Will I be able to count on you to stand up and support provincial bargaining for school support workers – one that allow us to negotiate a common pay plan that treats all support workers the same – whether they live in a large centre or a small rural one?

Points to Remember for a Successful Letter Lobby

- Get the name and address of the politician correct.
- Identify yourself or your organization.
- Get to the point at once in your letter.
- Use the material from the kit to help develop your argument.
- Use the key points in your letter.
- Personalize the issue — show how it affects you, your family and the community.
- Ask for an action or response from the school board member or MLA.
- Be clear about what you are requesting be done.
- Keep paragraphs to no more than six lines.
- Numbers count — get support from your members, other unions, community groups and friends.
- Consider emailing your members and contact list with a letter to be sent to their school board and MLA. Hand written or typed letters are quickly being replaced by email correspondence.

Sample letters

Dear Editor:

As an assistant building operator in the Saskatoon Public School system, I was shocked and disturbed when I recently learned that other workers around the province are performing the same duties as I do and in the same position are making far less in wages and with less benefits. I had always been under the assumption that we were all equal in terms of rates of pay and benefits.

Our work is essential to the provision of the best possible educational environment for our children.

Provincial bargaining will allow for fairness and equality for workers across Saskatchewan.

Sincerely,
Mark Kincade

Dear Editor:

School amalgamation has shown there is a huge disparity in the wages and benefits paid to education workers across the province.

The time has come for the provincial government to bargain one collective agreement for all education workers in the province in the same way it does for other public sector workers – provincial government employees, SIAST, health care workers and teachers. Not only do these employees enjoy these benefits no matter where they work in the province,

they enjoy them at no cost to themselves. These benefits are fully funded by the provincial government.

Support workers (secretaries, caretakers, education assistants and bus drivers, to name a few) rely on the strength of their union local and the financial commitment of their employer to achieve any benefits. Any increase in benefits is often part of the overall compensation package and usually at the expense of an increase in hourly wages.

For approximately half the cost of teachers' benefits, the provincial government has the opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of education support staff and to reduce the costs to school divisions. This reduction in cost to school divisions would see more of the school divisions finding going directly to students in increased ability to supply the resources necessary for the education of children.

This is a win-win situation. Improving the quality of life for support workers and increasing the resources available to teachers. It is time for the provincial government to stop thinking about provincial bargaining for education support staff and start doing it

Judy Seager

Dear Editor:

School support workers work in the same classrooms, with the same children as teachers and strive to provide the best education possible for our children – our future. School support workers need to be treated fairly.

With the school division amalgamations in the 90s and again in 2006, wages and benefits inequalities have begun to even out but we have a long way to go. Caretakers, bus drivers, educational assistants and all of us need to be paid the same wages and enjoy the same benefits no matter where they work in Saskatchewan.

I know when our school district amalgamated in 1997, many of us saw wage increases of \$4-\$5 per hour which brought us up to our co-workers in neighbouring communities.

We have many, many reasons for demanding provincial wages and benefits. The time is right for our government to provide fair and equal wages and benefits to our school support workers in Saskatchewan.

Brenda Anderson

Dear Editor:

When choosing to raise my two children in the rural area, I didn't realize that it would mean working two to three jobs to make ends meet.

I work full time as a secretary at one of the satellite offices for the Horizon School Division. I only make \$18 per hour. A secretary working for a school division in the city makes close to \$20 per hour.

This is an issue of fairness and equity.

I also work part-time for the health region as a home health aide. In this position I make the same hourly wage as a home health aide working in Saskatoon. Why?

Because home health aides are covered by the same provincial agreement.

Again, is this not an issue of fairness and equity?

My wage from the health region comes from the government and my wage from the school division comes from the government in a round about way also.

We, as school support staff, are asking, no demanding to have provincial wages and

benefits from the government. It's a matter of fairness and equity.

Sincerely,
Sheila Bindig

Quick facts on CUPE school workers

Did you know:

- CUPE represents just under 6,500 school support workers in the province.
- Our members work as educational and teaching assistants, secretaries, library assistants and technicians, caretakers, bus drivers, computer technicians, social workers, community school co-ordinators, speech assistants, trades workers and other classifications.
- CUPE negotiates 24 different collective agreements with 20 school divisions in the K-12 sector, down from 58 collective agreements before school amalgamations. We also negotiate 2 collective agreements with a private school bus company.
- CUPE education workers have been seeking provincial bargaining rights since the 1970's. The goal is one collective agreement for all school support workers. The arguments for provincial bargaining are stronger now than they have ever been.
- In 1997, CUPE represented about 2,800 school board employees in just under half of the school divisions in Saskatchewan. The union now represents over 71% of the approximately 9,100 school board support staff in the province.
- As a result of organizing drives and school amalgamations, CUPE's representation could increase to 85% in the near future.
- Of those 24 school board agreements, 96% have a dental plan, but only 58% are 100% employer-paid. As well, 87.5% have an extended health care plan, but only 54% of those plans are employer paid.
- In contrast, teachers have a comprehensive government-paid benefit package that includes vision, dental and extended health.

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Lobby Report - MLA

Your feedback will help your local keep track of the commitments made by your politician(s). It will also help other CUPE members to make the most of their lobby efforts. We learn from each other's experience.

CUPE Local: _____ Employer: _____

Lobby Team Members: _____

Name of MLA: _____

Riding: _____

Cabinet Post (if relevant): _____

The elected representative agreed:

To support our efforts to achieve provincial bargaining. YES NO *(please circle one)*

To discuss the issue with other MLAs. YES NO *(please circle one)*

Other: _____

Concerns/ questions raised by elected official about provincial bargaining for K-12 education:

Further follow-up required: _____

Lobby Reporter: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please send completed form to:
Jackie Christianson
Education Workers' Campaign Coordinator
3731 E. Eastgate Drive, Regina, SK S4Z 1A5
or
Email: jackiechristianson@myaccess.ca
or
Fax: 306-781-8177

Lobby Report - School Board

Your feedback will help your local keep track of the commitments made by your politician(s). It will also help other CUPE members to make the most of their lobby efforts. We learn from each other's experience.

CUPE Local: _____ Employer: _____

Lobby Team Members: _____

Name of School Board Member: _____

School Division: _____

The elected representative agreed:

To support our efforts to achieve provincial bargaining. YES NO *(please circle one)*

To discuss the issue with other division board members. YES NO *(please circle one)*

Other: _____

Concerns/ questions raised by elected official about provincial bargaining for K-12 education:

Further follow-up required: _____

Lobby Reporter: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please send completed form to:
Jackie Christianson
Education Workers' Campaign Coordinator
3731 E. Eastgate Drive, Regina, SK S4Z 1A5
or
Email: jackiechristianson@myaccess.ca
or
Fax: 306-781-8177

Lobby Report - Letters

Your feedback will help your local keep track of the commitments made by your politician(s). It will also help other CUPE members to make the most of their lobby efforts. We learn from each other's experience.

CUPE Local: _____ Employer: _____

Lobby Team Members: _____

Letters written to:

Letters published:

Lobby Reporter: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please send completed form to:
Jackie Christianson
Education Workers' Campaign Coordinator
3731 E. Eastgate Drive, Regina, SK S4Z 1A5
or
Email: jackiechristianson@myaccess.ca
or
Fax: 306-781-8177

Lobby Report - CUPE Locals

Your feedback will help your local keep track of the commitments made by your politician(s). It will also help other CUPE members to make the most of their lobby efforts. We learn from each other's experience.

CUPE Local: _____ Employer: _____

Lobby Team Members: _____

Name of President: _____

The Local agreed:

To support our efforts to achieve provincial bargaining. YES NO *(please circle one)*

To discuss the issue with other CUPE members. YES NO *(please circle one)*

Other: _____

Concerns/ questions raised by elected official about provincial bargaining for K-12 education:

Further follow-up required: _____

Lobby Reporter: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please send completed form to:
Jackie Christianson
Education Workers' Campaign Coordinator
3731 E. Eastgate Drive, Regina, SK S4Z 1A5
or
Email: jackiechristianson@myaccess.ca
or
Fax: 306-781-8177