



CUPE
EDUCATION
WORKERS

**Members'
bulletin**

THE POWER OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

April 2019

Government consultations on public sector compensation: update and next steps

This week representatives of the OSBCU attended two of the Treasury Board's "consultations" on wage restraint for public sector workers.

An update follows below, but there are two things we want OSBCU locals and members to know up front:

- **Public services and free collective bargaining are under threat from this government.**
- **On Monday, April 29 at 6pm, CUPE Ontario will hold an urgent Town Hall Call to update members on the way forward** (see below for details)

Update on consultations: Tuesday morning's consultation was ~~was~~ a dedicated session for CUPE Ontario; Laura Walton and national Staff assigned to the OSBCU attended that session along with staff and representatives from other CUPE sectors. CUPE Ontario president Fred Hahn and CUPE regional director for Ontario, Joe Matasic, addressed the government's representatives.

Wednesday's consultation on education (teachers attended a separate session) was attended by OSBCU's Bargaining Team, representatives from CUPE Ontario and CUPE staff; other unions representing education workers were there too. OSBCU president Laura Walton and CUPE school board coordinator Darcie McEathron spoke on behalf of CUPE education workers.

Those differences aside, the consultations were basically the same. Union representatives were asked to respond to a set of flawed, dishonest and frankly silly questions that asked us to suggest how unions could help restrain public sector wages.

What we said:

- CUPE, OSBCU and other unions defended the free collective bargaining process as the best way to determine public sector wages.
- CUPE and OSBCU both described the vital public service jobs that CUPE members perform every day across Ontario; the diversity of CUPE members; and the public sector jobs that are too often low paid and precarious.
- We gave concrete suggestions for addressing government deficits, like contracting services back in house and ending P3s.
- We stressed the unfairness of asking public sector workers, and education workers in particular, to solve a problem that they did not create.

The main government spokespersons at the consultations were hired lawyers. They had no answers to our questions beyond “all options are on the table.” In Wednesday’s session, they repeatedly referred to teachers and didn’t recognize – until we reminded them – that children in school are supported by a vast array of education workers who are a fundamental part of Ontario’s education system.

In solidarity,



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OSBCU President

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