

EDUCATION WORKER JOBS ARE BEING CUT ACROSS THE PROVINCE – FIGHT TO DEFEND JOBS AND SERVICES!

CUPE-OSBCU Central Bargaining Proposals 2026

Understaffing crisis in Ontario publicly funded schools

There is an understaffing crisis in Ontario schools. Put bluntly, there are not enough education workers to meet the needs of students and workers, leading to staff who are overworked and burnt out, and an education system that fails to meet the expectations of students, parents and workers.

CUPE-OSBCU surveyed members on their workload, staffing levels, and student needs. Survey results showed that more education workers are needed in every job classification. Members' stress and burnout are rising. Student needs are going unmet.

Understaffing contributes to the problem of rising violence in schools, making schools less safe for workers and students.

Groups across the province, including People for Education, the Ontario Autism Coalition, Fund Our Schools, Community Living Ontario, and many others have identified the understaffing crisis and have recommended the Provincial Government hire more education workers.

CUPE-OSBCU Central Bargaining Proposals to address the understaffing crisis

CUPE-OSBCU has several demands that will increase the number of education worker positions across all classifications. These demands include:

- **Funding to hire permanent CUPE staff for the 63 boards where CUPE represents members, similar to what we won in 2017 and 2019. Some of this would be dedicated to special education staff, some of it will be dedicated to office, clerical, technical, custodial, maintenance, library, etc.**
- **Guarantee of a designated early childhood educator (DECE) in any class that has at least one kindergarten student. Currently boards do not have to assign a DECE to a class with fewer than 16 kindergarten students.**
- **Hire more Educational Assistants and make it mandatory that at least one EA be assigned to every class with a kindergarten student.**
- **Cap of 26 students in kindergarten classes.**
- **Include all new positions in the job security language to make sure these jobs are permanent.**

More education workers in schools are necessary to the success of the entire publicly funded, publicly delivered education system in Ontario.

It will take people power to win – together we can fight for Better Schools and a Better Tomorrow. Contact your Local Executive to get involved in your local strike planning and community outreach efforts to make your voice count.