

From the Chair

Welcome to a newly elected EWSC Executive. At the EWSC 2011 annual conference, five positions were up for election and were filled by delegates. We would like to offer a warm welcome and congratulations to: Vice Chair - Earl Booth Local 5506, Secretary- Treasurer - Russ Tocker Local 1125, Executive Members 2 year term - Omar Murray Local 4754, Karla Sastaunik Local 4784, and Janice WolfmueLLer Local 5252. As a result of the elections, a by-election was held for two Executive Members for a 1 year term. Welcome and congratulations to Del Augustine Local 1125 and Mark Welder Local 4254. Welcome to our new staff advisor, Dave Stevenson.

Since our last newsletter, EWSC Executive rolled out the "One for All" Provincial Bargaining Campaign in Watrous on March 21st. We have since met with the Minister of Education, the Sask. Party Standing Policy Committee, the NDP MLAs and the SSBA. We have been corresponding with the STF and a meeting with take place soon.

The delegates at our "One for All" workshop had questions regarding the structure of Provincial Bargaining. So, the EWSC Executive decided to take our campaign message on the road. We met with 9 different locals to explain the campaign, expel the myths and move forward with the "One for All" lobbying efforts. Another 6 local executives presented the "One for All" message to their members. All locals

are being encouraged to lobby their MLAs to inform them on the fairness of **One** collective agreement **for All** education support workers.

On Nov. 7th, we will all go to the polls to tell the Sask. Party government how we think they're doing as a government.

Our education system is at a crossroads. Since 2007, we've lost 350 full-time equivalent educational assistants; we've seen teachers on the picket line and we've seen several school closures. In 2009, the Ministry of Education took control of the mill rate from our school divisions. This action has had serious consequences, as we bargain separately with our school divisions. These are the same school divisions who no longer have the ability to adjust the mill rate to reflect a fair collective agreement. Provincial bargaining for support workers has never been more important! We need to stand up for ourselves, our schools, our workplaces and our students by voting for candidates who want to strengthen the education system and invest in children.

The Education Workers' Steering Committee joins CUPE Saskatchewan in urging every CUPE member to "Vote for Yourself". You may hear from the New Democrats and the Sask. Party on a number of issues—but this is your province and you have the right and the responsibility to decide which issues matter to you and your family and cast your ballot based on real information.

CUPE Saskatchewan has built a non-partisan campaign of real information to provide CUPE members with the facts. The "Vote for Yourself" posters have been distributed to locals to give us information about the economy; privatization; public services; health care; and the wages, benefits and pensions we earn as CUPE members. For more information please go to, www.cupe.sk.ca/election2011

Regardless of which party wins the election, every single vote answers the question: do you like what your government has done?

It's critical that we as education workers are active in electing our own bosses. Please do not let apathy be the thief that robs you of your humanity. Contact your candidates to ask questions and on Nov. 7th, "Vote for Yourself".

The EWSC Executive is planning a follow up mini-conference on January 30th, 2012 in Humboldt. Our topic of discussion: "How to hire your bosses for the 2012 school board elections". Stay tuned for more details!

The EWSC Executive would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and say a sad good bye to Brother Glenn Douglas and Sisters Gwen Murphy, Sheila Bindig, Lori Sutherland and staff advisor, Elaine Ehman. Thank you for your hard work, kindness, humour and most of all your dedication to the education support workers in Saskatchewan. Your work will be sadly missed!

In Solidarity,

Jackie Christianson, Chair EWSC

EWSC PROVINCIAL

OCT/NOV 2011

NEWS FOR CUPE EDUCATION WORKERS IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPOTLIGHT ON

KARLA SASTAUNIK

Shop Steward and
Communications Officer
CUPE Local 4784

"I love the students I work with; they are filled with such a joy for life that inspires me to look around and be

thankful for all that is great in my life. These kids fill a place in my heart and as a result I love

going to school every day". This is the way Sister Sastaunik describes her job as an educational assistant at Langenburg High School, in the Good Spirit School Division. She has been an EA for 24 years, spending the last 10 in Good Spirit School Division.

Karla is an engaged community member and is very active in her home community of Churchbridge, working with community groups to make improvements for the entire community.

Her desire to help others and her sense of fairness and justice has led her to being very active in her Union. She is the shop steward and communications officer for CUPE Local 4784. Her work ethic and

commitment are commendable. When a job needs to be done, Karla is often the first to volunteer and the work always gets done. She has developed a handbook which she gives to all new members in her area and has shared with other stewards in the local as well as other education

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS
LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD,
FACILITATING AN
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR
ALL.

sector locals
across the
province.

In addition to her work with the local Karla has assisted with credentials at the

CUPE SK convention and has worked with the Education Workers Steering Committee on both the educational assistant campaign and the provincial bargaining campaign. She has spoken publicly about the important and valuable work that educational assistants across Saskatchewan do and advocates for special needs students and their educational opportunities.

"I have been blessed to find a career that is truly my passion"

When asked to say a few words about Karla, her administrator said, "Karla works diligently to ensure that she is always providing the students with the best possible assistance and she ensures that she is aware of all of the latest training

and strategies in working with special needs students and in turn passes this knowledge on to all of her colleagues. Karla embodies all of the things that a truly great Educational Assistant is and should be."

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO SHOULD BE IN THE SPOTLIGHT? PLEASE LET US KNOW SO WE CAN HELP OUR MEMBERS SHINE.

Email to: cupe_4799@hotmail.com



EWSC Website:

www.saskedworkers.cupe.ca

Check out our website for current news and events that affect YOU as an education worker in Saskatchewan



REPORT

CUPE Saskatchewan has had a busy year of building activism and momentum.

We hosted a wonderful convention; the highlight for me was welcoming visitor and guest speaker Berneice Celeyta, a human rights activist from Cali, Colombia. She spoke, through a translator, about the issues she encounters. "Each year, 8,000 people in Colombia are assassinated for political reasons," she said. Many are trade union leaders, who oppose the government's plan to privatize health care, education, electricity, water and other important resources.

On July 6th, CUPE Saskatchewan hosted an "All Presidents" meeting. Topics included the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA), Right to Work Legislation, the upcoming provincial election, this year's National Convention, the "Imagine What We Could Do" campaign which discusses resource royalty rates, and our work supporting Habitat for Humanity.

Other topics CUPE Sask is working with include:

-The VOTE FOR YOURSELF Campaign. The final document distributed to locals will contain answers from the leaders of the sitting parties to six questions CUPE Saskatchewan asked in letters;

-An Executive Board think tank session being planned for November; and

-A new "clear language" constitution which will be presented at the National Convention. (CUPE Saskatchewan amended the provincial constitution to be clear language at the 2009 provincial convention).

CUPE Saskatchewan has a candidate endorsement on the record. Our provincial executive wishes best of luck to Judy Henley, CUPE Sk's Treasurer, who will be running for National Secretary-Treasurer.

Also, congratulations to Ann Iwanchuk, CUPE Staff representative in the Saskatoon office and former EWSC advisor, who was successful in her bid for Saskatoon City Council in this fall's Ward 3 by-election.

Submitted in solidarity,
Omar Murray



PROVINCIAL ELECTION

NOVEMBER 7

Education Assistant Campaign

Davidson Summit Committee

This campaign was developed out of a need to expose the Ministry of Education's funding model which highlighted the need to reduce the number of EAs within the province by 75% over 7 years.

The Ministry outlines a "peer-based" support for special needs students. This, in turn, would reduce the number of EAs required within the classroom.

Since January 2010, the DSC has embarked on campaign to hold the Ministry accountable for their words. Leaflets have been distributed to communities, public forums have been held and the issue has been covered by several of the major media groups within the province.

The Ministry now suggests that they have not directed school boards to reduce their EA numbers, but rather it was a decision undertaken by school boards. We continue to gather evidence to the contrary.

As school boards no longer have the authority to increase their mill rate to supplement budget shortfalls, they are left with little options. The Ministry controls the dollars allocated

to each school board and these dollars do not nearly cover the expenses incurred let alone any monetary or benefits increases for support staff.

Therefore, school boards are forced to reduce costs where they see fit. Unfortunately, these cost-saving measures come on the backs of the most vulnerable in the school system.

We will continue the fight to have this notion of the Ministry re-examined and bring supports for those that need it, back to the classroom.

DID YOU KNOW?

From August 2007 to June 2011 Saskatchewan School Divisions:

- reduced 350 education assistants
- increased 712 intensive needs students
- reduced 81 classroom teachers
- increased 5676 students
- reduced 97 total staff
- 79% of Saskatchewan school divisions reduced EAs

On August 24th the Davidson Summit Committee along with the support of CUPE SK, organized a press conference to speak out about these facts.

Tom Graham, President of CUPE SK, opened the press conference by informing the media that these facts were obtained through a Freedom of Information Request (FOIR)

from the Ministry of Education.

Jackie Christianson, Chair of the EWSC and member of the Davidson Summit Committee, spoke about the Ministry of Education's facts. Jackie described the support EAs provide to intensive need students to help them gain independence.

Barb Sambasivam, a parent of an intensive needs child and retired teacher, gave a detailed account on the value and impact that EAs have made on her son and the teaching profession as a whole. Barb spoke of the concern that all parents should have in regards to these shocking numbers.

Karla Stasaunik, an education assistant from Good Spirit School Division, explained the important role that EAs serve in the school system. Karla described the despair her students feel and the panic she feels at the end of the day as she may not have helped all the students who needed it.

Trish Elliott, spokesperson from the Regina community organization Real Renewal, advocated for parents to organize in their communities to ensure greater transparency and parental voice in decision-making within their school division.

Rick Hesch a former teacher, principal, professor and researcher, discussed the Ministry of Education changes and the implications these changes are having on Saskatchewan students and families.

The following media picked up the facts; CBC radio and TV, CTV, CJME radio - John Gormley and Andrew Dawson, CJWW, Prince

Albert Harold, Regina Leader Post, Lloydminster Meridian Booster, the Four Town Journal, Maple Creek Advance Times, Estevan Mercury, Prairie Dog and Planet S.

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 EDUCATION WORKERS ARE
 BARGAINING WITH THE
 WRONG PEOPLE**