



School Division Amalgamation **UPDATE**

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES



November 2003

Manitoba Labour Board Action CUPE gains new members in Park West

Park West School Division

An application went forward to the MLB last May claiming intermingling (from Local 3037). The employer acknowledged intermingling had taken place and the Labour Board has agreed. A meeting was held recently with representatives of the Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union to determine who would be involved in a representation vote. The MLB vote took place on November 3rd-5th and CUPE now represents all the support workers in the Division.

River East Transcona School Division

UFCW bus drivers have appealed to the MLB to resolve an issue with the School Division which may affect members in CUPE Local 796. The RETSD does not want to take the drivers into the newly amalgamated Division, only their routes and transport. The MLB hearing, on whether or not the drivers are included in the Division, will be held on January 19 & 20, 2004.

Members of Local 3465 (paraprofessionals) are expecting representation votes as members of the River East Paraprofessionals Association are performing similar duties, but this will take longer to resolve. No application has yet been made to the MLB.

Pembina Trails School Division

Members of Local 3821 representing the office secretaries are now working in the same office as secretaries represented by the Assiniboine South Association of Non-Teaching Employees. The MLB has set January 29th for a hearing to determine what is the appropriate bargaining unit for the Division which will then lead to a representation vote later in the year.

Louis Riel School Division

The paraprofessionals in the former St. Vital School Division, Local 3473 (with about 180 members), are expecting a representation vote with the St. Boniface Association of Non-Teaching Employees. Their Amalgamation Committee has already produced an information pamphlet and held meetings to lay the groundwork for a representation vote.

Bus Drivers End Strike

After a three-week strike, the 32 members of Local 4458 (bus drivers for Prairie Rose School Division) ratified a collective agreement on October 2nd.

The main issue for the Local was harmonization of wages. Because of amalgamation, drivers from the former White Horse Plains School Division were paid more than drivers from the former Midland School Division. Parity will be phased in over two and a half years.

Division Trustees were adamant they would not agree to parity. However, after delaying negotiations and ignoring union offers, they finally agreed that a fair wage based on parity was reasonable. As with bargaining in Sunrise School Division, Trustees have resisted wage parity but eventually found the funds and realized the benefits of paying the same wage for same work.

The other major issue that did not get resolved, but which will be on the table next year when negotiations start again, is a change from the MAST to the Municipal Employees Pension Plan. While members realize the value of the change, the Trustees were unable to even discuss pension change.

Current Bargaining

Pembina Trails School Division

Both CUPE Locals in the Division (3821 and 1112) are in negotiations now. The Division is requesting concessions from the members and Local 1112 is in conciliation. Wages, vacations, increased professional development days, pension and dental plans are some of the issues on the bargaining table. Custodial/Maintenance/Bus Drivers (Local 4588) are also without a contract and will be negotiating a merged collective agreement in November.

River East Transcona School Division

Members of Locals 796, 1367 and 3873 have been without a contract since January of this year. They are presently in conciliation. The outstanding issues are a guarantee of the 200 school days of work (starting after Labour Day has shortened the work period for some members) and a commitment to review the pension plan. All the Locals are bargaining at the same table.

School Division Sector Conference

The CUPE Manitoba School Division Conference will be held November 13th – 16th in Russell. About 100 delegates from across the province are expected to attend this annual event.

In addition to the regular business of the conference, the main topics on the agenda include:

- Working together after amalgamation;
- More autonomy in processing grievances;
- Pension plan change (from MAST to MEPP);
- Strategic bargaining;
- Safe schools legislation (proposed by the government);
- Representation vote campaigns.

Canada's Largest Union

CUPE, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, is Canada's largest union, with more than a half-million women and men working in all areas of the public sector. CUPE Manitoba has 24,000 members, including 3,800 of the province's school division support workers. A basic principle of CUPE is to assure Local autonomy and responsiveness so that every member has a voice in a variety of issues that affect them.

For more information on CUPE:

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