



# THE CUPE "QUARTERLY"

The start of the 2020/2021 school year has been unlike any other and to those of you returning from summer break we hope you enjoyed some much needed down time as it looks as though the year ahead is going to be an onerous. To those who have worked straight through we encourage you to try and find some time away to recharge your battery for the long road ahead.

Some great work has been done over the summer months by many of our members in order to prepare the sites for a safe staff and student return. We want to be sure to acknowledge the members at Maintenance as well as those within our Custodial division that have made certain our schools ventilation systems are all in good working order, plexi-glass shields were built & installed in all the necessary locations; just to name a few. The expectations regarding cleaning are the highest they have ever been, and we are so very proud of the work that each and every custodian has had to put in to achieve these new standards. We are also pleased to see that every school bus in the fleet has been outfitted with a plexi-glass barrier behind the driver and a clear vinyl curtain to the right of the driver that they can close once seated behind the wheel.

With the delayed start to the school year this meant our 10-month employees were able to work at their sites and familiarize themselves with the new health & safety protocols and address any questions or concerns they might have with their respective Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committees. For those members working in the Assistants division, in particular E.A.'s and CYCW's who work hands on with students, the expectation was that that you would be provided time to review student I.E.P.'s, staff Safety Plans, in so far as they relate to your assignment thus ensuring your health & safety issues were addressed prior to students returning to school.

Personal protective equipment (P.P.E.) in the form of gloves, non-medical masks, cloth masks, clear face shields, smocks, hand & arm guards, head & hair coverings is something that all members are permitted access to and depending on the task at hand will determine what is required. A risk assessment, which is conducted by members of the sites JOHS committee along with the member in need of protection, should be done to ascertain what is needed based on the situation. The Union expects to see a lot more of these being conducted than in the past, despite them always being a requirement, when a worker's health and/or safety is in question.

Lastly, we understand that the last six months have brought about tremendous change, not only in our workplace, but in our personal lives as well. We would ask that you please exhibit some tolerance and patience to your colleagues who may be struggling with this adversity during these uncertain times. A little kindness, caring and compassion can go a long way in making someone's day just a little easier and their life a little brighter.....

In Solidarity,  
**CUPE 411 Executive**

