



CUPE BC 2022 CONVENTION EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT

Introduction

CUPE BC is British Columbia's largest union, representing more than 100,000 members across the province in a wide variety of sectors. The services our members provide impact the daily lives of British Columbians and are key in ensuring vibrant and healthy communities province wide.

At each annual convention, CUPE BC's Executive Board reports to delegates who attend convention on behalf of their Local. It is important for all members to know what we have done to deliver on commitments made at the past convention and to hear about our victories, challenges, and the resolve of all of our Locals.

We have completed a lot of very important and impactful work since our last convention, all stemming from our Union's constitutional objectives and the resolutions passed in 2021.

Every year, following convention, CUPE BC hosts a *Think Tank*. This is a strategic planning session where Executive Board members, District Council presidents, and staff come together to review that year's convention, and strategize and develop plans on how we will put into action the resolutions you have mandated us to enact. This also helps ensure proactive planning and effective use of our resources for the year ahead.

This report endeavors to provide a clear picture of our work over the past year, to talk about some of our upcoming challenges, and to celebrate our members' victories.

Bargaining and Strike Support

While CUPE BC is not responsible for collective bargaining, we do offer support, when requested, to Locals facing difficult situations at the bargaining table. Whether that is putting out the call for support on a picket line, applying political pressure by presenting to all levels of government and governing boards, engaging allies, reaching out to other unions, or offering financial support, CUPE BC is always prepared to support our members and help them overcome challenges.

Since our convention last year, we have been preparing for a significant amount of public sector bargaining that will be taking place this year. This includes all sectors under provincial jurisdiction: K-12, Universities, Colleges, Health, Social Services, and BC Assessment. We are working with the other public sector unions to get the best deal for our members. CUPE members continue to be integral to B.C.'s economic recovery, our first responders continue to save lives under two public health emergencies, and schools are open due to the dedication of school support staff. In addition, post-secondary education is thriving as people continue to appreciate its value, social services never slowed down, transit kept people moving throughout the province, and BC Assessment still got property notices out on time. CUPE members will continue to deliver these critical public services.

Municipal and Library bargaining is ongoing across the province. Despite the challenges presented by bargaining during a pandemic, there has been a significant number of settlements with fair wage increases and significant language improvements. Congratulations to all Locals and National Servicing Representatives for their efforts to achieve fair collective agreements for our members.

While there were no Locals on strike since our last convention, several Locals took strike votes or supported other unions on the picket line in their fight for a fair collective agreement. This included:

- CUPE 401 – Vancouver Island Regional Library – our members are supporting a BCGEU strike of the 48 librarians and will continue to hold those picket lines until a fair deal is achieved at the table. At time of writing, we understand a tentative agreement has been reached but a ratification vote has not yet been taken.

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However, we don't just support CUPE members on strike. We support our allies from the affiliate unions of the BC Federation of Labour. CUPE members walked picket lines in solidarity in the Lower Mainland with UNITE HERE Local 40 members who are on strike at the Metrotown Hilton, as well as the Pacific Gateway Hotel. We also continue to support IBEW 213 members who work for Ledcor in their fight for a fair first collective agreement (4 years and counting).

COVID-19 Public Health Crisis and Natural Disaster Response

Since our last Division convention, CUPE members have risen to the numerous challenges presented by a seemingly endless cycle of crises. In addition to responding to the ongoing and evolving COVID-19 pandemic, we faced back-to-back climate emergencies from record breaking temperatures during the 2021 heat dome and widespread wildfires across the province to catastrophic flooding in the fall. We faced the public health pressures and tragedy associated with the toxic drug supply and overdose crisis. CUPE members have faced all these challenges head on, showing tremendous strength, resilience, and commitment to their communities throughout.

We saw this in the Fraser Canyon community of Lytton, where our members were among those who lost their homes and their jobs as a wildfire ripped through their community. CUPE mobilized its resources through the Division, as Locals worked with members and Regional staff to ensure that those in shelters and other evacuees had access to emergency hardship funds. Members worked day and night to help their neighbours, despite suffering themselves. To those who lost everything over the course of a few minutes, our hearts and hands are with you as you rebuild.

We also saw this spirit of sacrifice in Abbotsford, Merritt, and other communities devastated by the floods. Despite the logistical challenges of the recovery effort – with roads and train tracks either washed away by mudslides or submerged, and pumping stations pushed to the breaking point – CUPE members in municipalities worked around the clock to ensure that critical infrastructure functioned, that community members were evacuated safely, and that emergency operation centres had the most up to date information. In some cases, while our members worked around the clock to keep key infrastructure going, their families were evacuating their

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own homes and sheltering in neighbouring communities or civic centres. We are deeply grateful to you, for your selfless efforts on others' behalf. We salute you.

All the while, CUPE members have been constantly adapting and pivoting, evolving and shifting how we work and live over the past year as the COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges. Since we were last together, vaccines became widely available, with over 90% of eligible British Columbians now vaccinated. As we faced successive waves of COVID-19 through 2021 and into 2022, we have seen public health restrictions come and go, in an effort to limit the strain of the pandemic on our health care system. We wore masks, we stayed apart, we worked behind barriers, we met virtually. We kept critical public services going – we kept hospitals open, medical services available, community supports functioning, schools and public libraries open, transit operational. This past year demonstrated more than ever the critical importance of public services, and how healthy, well-funded public services create functioning and supported communities. And, as we eventually move toward COVID-19 as endemic and learn to live, in the long term, with the coronavirus and its variants, we cannot forget the lessons we have learned and those who got us through these past few years at great personal sacrifice. As we move forward, there is great opportunity to rebuild in a way that lifts up workers, that builds strong and inclusive communities, and that unites us all.

Pandemic Relief Funds

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, CUPE BC launched a significant financial support program for Locals. Pandemic Fund phase 1 (2020) and phase 2 (2021). The creation of these funds recognized the challenge Locals faced in purchasing the technology and equipment required to maintain their operations and service their members. Most of our CUPE Locals are less than 150 members. They often don't have the funds to buy laptops, cameras, and video conference accounts. The Pandemic Fund provided reimbursement of funds so Local leaders could purchase equipment immediately, and CUPE BC would reimburse up to \$3000 in phase 1 and \$1000 for phase 2. Over two years, CUPE BC provided the following financial support:

Phase 1:	\$ 297,896 (115 Locals and District Councils)
Phase 2:	<u>\$ 61,385 (68 Locals and District Councils)</u>
Total:	\$ 359,281

Disaster Relief Fund

In addition to the pandemic, CUPE members faced devastation from wildfires and flooding. In response, CUPE BC utilized the Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund (CJ Fund) to provide hardship donations of \$500 to members involved. An initial \$20,000 was put forward by CUPE BC and \$158,100 was received from donations by CUPE Locals, both in B.C. and across the country. A total of \$178,100 was raised, and \$116,500 was distributed to 231 members. The remaining funds were donated to charities that supported communities during this difficult year. In addition, \$54,000 was equally distributed to the United Way BC, BCSPCA, Migrant Workers Centre, and the BC Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Political Action

Political action has always been at the heart of CUPE BC. Electing progressive candidates to all levels of government is a priority and, over the past year, CUPE members have stepped up to support progressive candidates or run for office themselves.

2021 Federal Election

Though a federal election was not scheduled until 2023, Parliament was dissolved at the request of the Prime Minister and an election held September 20, 2021, less than two years since the last vote. At the time of dissolution, the composition of the House of Commons was 155 Liberals, 119 Conservatives, 32 BLOC Quebecois, 24 New Democrats, and two members of the Green Party. After a 36-day election period, a new election changed little, producing a new minority Liberal Government.

CUPE activism during the federal election was strategic and targeted. The campaign mobilized members to support NDP candidates and participate in labour canvasses in key ridings. It also connected with members across the province using a variety of platforms to encourage support of local NDP candidates. These two components, mobilizing and getting out the vote, both proved successful.

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Component 1: Getting out the CUPE Vote

The campaign used a range of partisan and nonpartisan activities to encourage CUPE members to vote in the election and further encourage support of their local NDP candidate. One of the primary tactics was an election mailer sent to CUPE's more than 100,000 members in B.C., with information about the NDP platform and key commitments. A series of e-mails were sent to more than 20,000 members with information about key election dates, national debates, advance voting opportunities, and voting on election day. The campaign also connected with members in key ridings using peer-to-peer texting to provide voting reminders and information. More than 10,000 members engaged with CUPE BC during the election via text messaging. Supporting these direct communications were a series of social media posts on Twitter and Facebook providing information and reminders about the election and key dates.

Component 2: Member Mobilization

The second campaign component was designed to support and promote direct activist engagement, mobilizing CUPE BC Executive Board and committee members, Local activists, and National Staff to help elect New Democrats in target ridings. To encourage and organize the necessary support for mobilizing, the Executive Board held a meeting on August 26, and an All-Presidents call on September 1, which included election presentations for Locals.

Mobilizing kicked off with a series of Labour Day canvasses and events in Chilliwack-Hope, Delta, Nanaimo-Ladysmith, Prince George-Peace River-Northern Rockies, and Victoria. In the weeks following, 25 canvasses and campaign events were held in 17 ridings. While several of the events were organized to support existing labour canvasses, more than half were CUPE BC-organized events. Overall election activism was lower than in the 2019 federal election, due to COVID-19 and related factors, but CUPE activism was always relatively high, with CUPE members often constituting the largest contingent at labour canvass events.

Social media played a key role in support mobilization during the federal election, especially though the promotion of canvass and other events on the CUPE BC Facebook page. Posts about events, particularly those posted directly by the Division President, promoted the campaign work being done by CUPE members, creating a sense of community among those

volunteering. It also demonstrated the breadth of CUPE's work in the campaign, showing the many ridings being supported and the frequency with which members were out campaigning.

B.C. Results

National results overshadowed those in B.C., which showed an improvement in NDP support over the 2019 election when New Democrats won 11 seats. That number increased to 13 in 2021 with the gains of Port Moody-Coquitlam and Nanaimo-Ladysmith – both ridings targeted by the campaign. The remaining B.C. seats were split between the Conservatives, who won in 13 ridings; the Liberals, who won in 15 ridings; and the Greens, who maintained their one seat in Saanich North and the Islands.

Next Federal Election

The current federal Liberal government holds only a minority of seats in Parliament, and minority governments tend not to last much longer than two years on average. Following the removal of Conservative Party of Canada leader Erin O'Toole by his own caucus, there was increased speculation that another election may be close at hand. However, in March of this year the NDP and the Liberals negotiated a Supply and Confidence Agreement that would see the NDP support the Liberal minority through to the next scheduled election in exchange for delivering on key commitments, notably expanding public healthcare. Accordingly, it is expected that the next federal election will occur as scheduled on October 20, 2025.

2021-22 Local Government By-Elections

Local by-elections in British Columbia are called as vacancies arise. A higher-than-average number were held in 2021 due to vacancies arising from the election of local government members to the B.C. Legislature in October 2020 and to Parliament in September 2021. The list of completed local government by-elections between April 2021 and March 2022 is as follows:

- Village of Masset – April 17 – successful candidate elected with 63 votes
- Powell River School District (47) – April 24 – successful candidate wins by a margin of 38 votes, labour-endorsed candidate finishes third
- City of Castlegar – April 24 – mayor and council member elected
- City of Mission – April 24 – Local's preferred candidate elected mayor

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- Town of Qualicum – May 15 – successful candidate elected with a plurality of votes
- City of Fort St. John – May 15 – successful candidate elected with 38% of 8% voter turnout
- North Vancouver School District (44) – May 29 – successful candidate elected with a plurality, Local-endorsed candidate finished fifth
- Vernon School District (22) – May 29 – Local’s preferred candidate won by a single vote
- City of Richmond – May 29 – 10% voter turnout, endorsed candidate finished third
- City of Terrace – June 5 – successful candidate earned 62% of 9% turnout
- Fraser-Fort George Regional District – June 5 – cancelled due to lack of candidates
- City of Penticton – June 19 – Manager of Penticton Herald elected with 33% of the vote
- Village of Silverton – June 19 – successful candidate elected with 90 total votes
- Central Okanagan School District – June 26 – labour-endorsed candidate won with 50.6% of the 2,033 votes cast
- City of Burnaby – June 26 – two council members elected, one of them labour endorsed, second labour-endorsed candidate fell short by only 125 votes
- District of Stewart – July 17 – successful candidate elected with 103 votes out of 173 ballots cast
- Town of Creston – September 18 – two candidates elected out of a field of four, only 43 votes separated the third-place candidate from the second elected candidate
- Village of Pouce Coupe – September 18 – two candidates were elected with 118 and 72 votes respectively out of a field of five and with 374 total votes cast (20 votes separated second- and fifth-place finishers)
- City of Abbotsford – September 25 – successful candidate elected with 43% of the vote
- Village of Granisle – November 6 – successful candidate elected with 61 total votes
- Town of Comox – November 27 – successful candidate won with 54% of the vote
- City of Vernon – December 4 – successful candidate won with 27% of the vote, and by 14 total votes
- Prince George School District (57) – January 15 – endorsed candidate fell short by 12 votes for Prince George seat, the MacKenzie seat was won with 76 votes to the challenger’s 38 votes
- Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District (68) – January 15 – endorsed candidate won with a strong majority
- District of Wells – February 5 – successful candidate won with 89 total votes

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For each of the above-noted by-elections, National Representatives conducted outreach with Locals to offer assistance with candidate endorsement, promote endorsements to CUPE members, and/or assist CUPE members in getting out to vote. The results included with the list of by-elections highlights the very low voter turnout for local government by-elections, the small margins of victory for most successful candidates, and the tremendous opportunity to get progressives elected in by-elections.

2022 Local Government General Election

Work has begun to prepare for the 2022 local government elections. Information in this section will outline some key information about the election, as well as work undertaken.

Local Election Campaign Finance Act (LECFA)

The adoption of the LECFA in 2021 ushered in new changes for how third-party campaigners such as CUPE BC and its Locals approach local government elections. New restrictions limit public communication and spending, meaning that there are fewer engagement tactics CUPE entities can employ to reach the public. CUPE BC has created a guide on the new legislation to help Locals undertake work with members and consider third-party campaigning.

Campaign Timeline

The election will occur on Saturday, October 15. The campaign period begins on September 17, with the pre-campaign period beginning on July 18 – both important periods for any Local looking to undertake campaigning to the public. Nominations occur between August 30 and September 9, which is a very short window.

CUPE BC Campaign

Though a full election strategy has not yet been finalized, work will focus on membership engagement and mobilization tactics that do not require registration as a third party. The primary goal will be motivating members to vote for their local CUPE-endorsed candidates, with supporting goals of mobilizing members to volunteer with progressive campaigns and developing member activism and growing engagement in political and labour action. The Community Election Guide will be updated and re-issued as a key resource for the campaign.

Future of Election Engagement

As articulated in the Political Action Committee Report, recent changes to legislation on third-party engagement and advertising in federal, provincial, and local elections has required a substantial shift in the way CUPE BC engages. New legislation has removed big money from the electoral process, something that CUPE and other progressive organizations have long sought; however, some changes have had inadvertent negative outcomes for membership-based organizations in their capacity to engage with their members and the public. The new rules for election engagement will mean that CUPE BC campaigns will focus member mobilization on ensuring that members are getting out to vote, and supporting progressive, endorsed candidates. Though our capacity to engage with the public has been limited, this limitation has a far greater impact on the well-funded representatives of the wealthy and well-connected, and our continued ability to engage directly with members provides a real opportunity to effect change for the better.

Working With Our Governments

Provincial Government

We continue to see the difference that a progressive government can make in British Columbians' daily lives under John Horgan's NDP government. During a period that saw other provincial governments imposing concessions for public sector workers, mass layoffs, and cutbacks, the BC NDP government invested in workers, in public services, and in communities. Even as we faced multiple health crises – with the pressure of successive waves of COVID-19 on our healthcare system and frontline workers, a record numbers of overdose deaths due to the toxic drug supply, and as communities and critical infrastructure were hard hit by back-to-back climate emergencies with wildfires, record temperatures, and catastrophic flooding – our provincial government remained steadfast in its focus on building a better province. While there is still lots of work to do, and we continue to advocate for needed improvements and investments that matter, we must also reflect on how far we have come, despite the difficulties faced.

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In late spring 2021, the government introduced legislation laying the groundwork to provide for paid sick leave for workers in B.C. under the Employment Standards Act. Following consultations in the fall of 2021, five days paid sick leave was established as a floor, effective January 1, 2022. Unfortunately, the legislation was drafted in a manner that unintentionally denied this floor to workers covered by a collective agreement. Fortunately, the government further amended the ESA last month to ensure all workers in the province could access paid sick leave, meaning that workers don't have to choose between coming to work sick and being unable to make ends meet financially.

In August 2021, the government announced a phased-in approach to repatriate 4000 contracted-out health care cleaning and dietary workers back into the public system. This move reversed the BC Liberal's 20-year privatization policy that drove down wages for women and racialized workers, and fragmented the healthcare team.

Over the past year, we've seen legislation around childcare - an important step toward the government's 10-year Childcare BC Plan to give families access to quality, affordable childcare. And, earlier this year, childcare was moved into the Ministry of Education in an effort to lay the groundwork to accelerate access to convenient, affordable, quality childcare that better meets families' needs while easing children's transition to school.

We've seen increases to minimum wage tied to inflation, so the lowest-paid workers in B.C. aren't left behind amidst a rising cost of living. We've seen new protections through WorkSafeBC to help keep workers safe from the danger of asbestos. We've seen changes to skilled trades certifications, investments in complex care housing, and innovative approaches to expanding team based health care and community care. We've seen the newly announced StrongerBC plan – a visionary, ambitious economic plan that tackles some of the greatest challenges, from job creation and training, to service improvements, climate action, and tackling affordability.

The government's introduction of card check certification earlier this month means that workers can choose to join a union quicker and with less pressure from employers. It

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also means that workers who are precarious and who face intense pressure from anti-union employers during organizing campaigns can access the protection of a union and will have meaningful recourse should they face retaliation for organizing their workplaces. Once the legislation is passed – legislation that CUPE BC, the BC Federation of Labour, and its affiliates have been lobbying for for years – B.C. will join a handful of other provinces, as well as Canada, through the Canada Labour Code, who already have single-step certification in place.

These are just some of the many things we have seen from the BC NDP government over the past year. We recognize that this is just the beginning –there is lots of work left to do. That’s why we continue to meet with government representatives, to share our vision, and to advocate for issues that matter. CUPE BC both speaks for CUPE members and helps CUPE members speak with government. We are proud to be a grassroots Union that ensures workers’ voices are heard in Victoria.

Since the last Convention, we have met with the Premier; the Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing; the Minister of Labour; the Minister of Finance; the Minister of Education and Child Care; the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General; the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Strategy; the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions; the Minister of Municipal Affairs; the Minister of Citizens Services; the Minister of Health; the Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation; and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. We met with the Minister of State for Child Care, the Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives, the Parliamentary Secretary for Technology and Innovation, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Non-Profits.

In these meetings, we advocate for strong and well-funded public services; for affordability; for mental health supports for all of our members and for British Columbians; for stronger health and safety protections at work; for easier access to unionization by card check certification; for affordable tuition and access to training; for universal, affordable, inclusive, publicly delivered childcare; for anti-racism legislation and policies; for implementation of truth and reconciliation; for public transportation

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funding and infrastructure; for health care and adequate public health measures; and for fairness in our communities and in our workplaces. We work not just to identify challenges, but also to provide meaningful solutions that we can work together to achieve. We may not always agree, but we are at the table. We are, for the most part, being heard. This is not the experience of our counterparts across the country.

This government continues to consult with regular British Columbians and stakeholder organizations such as CUPE. With the diligent work of the CUPE National Research branch, we have presented to numerous panels and consultations, providing CUPE's perspective to government. In addition to our written Budget 2022 Submission, a number of CUPE BC Executive Board members presented to the provincial government's budget committee, advocating for funding improvements and investment in public services and initiatives that support people and strong communities.

CUPE BC was a partner agency in the recent Anti-Racism Data Legislation public engagement initiative through the Attorney General's Multiculturalism Branch. As part of this engagement, the CUPE BC Racialized Workers Committee engaged with 234 Black, Indigenous, and racialized members and their families through 14 online focus groups and an online survey. The purpose of the engagement was to identify gaps and barriers in shaping B.C.'s Anti-Racism Data Legislation, to address systemic racism, and better ensure equitable access to government services. We anticipate legislation will be introduced this spring.

There is much to come over the next year. The provincial government has undertaken a review of its pandemic response, and we will be participating to provide the perspective as the largest public sector union in the province, working across all sectors. We recently participated in the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner's ongoing inquiry into hate during the pandemic. We are engaging with the Ministry of Education and Child Care regarding a First Nations curriculum graduation requirement and how CUPE members might support this learning. The government has announced a post-secondary funding review which we will be participating in, and advocating for much-needed funding improvements to this sector.

Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and Area Associations

The UBCM convention is an opportunity to connect, lobby, and advocate to local government mayors and councillors from all over B.C. CUPE BC's presence is seen in many facets of the convention, including a trade show booth and a hosted reception open to all delegates. Members of Strong Communities and the chair of the CUPE BC Municipal Committee attend workshops and participate as guests on the convention floor, monitoring debates on issues that impact our members' work and the communities where they live.

There are also a variety of clinics, seminars, panels, and other learning opportunities for UBCM delegates. Like many organizations, the UBCM held a virtual convention in 2021. We attended a variety of sessions and workshops focusing on public transit, the impact of the pandemic on communities, economic recovery, and seniors' homes, hearing from government officials at all levels.

BC School Trustees' Association (BCSTA)

CUPE BC hosts a reception for delegates at the BCSTA's AGM, which provides us with the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns for CUPE members who work in the K-12 sector. In 2021, the event was held virtually, with sponsorship opportunities for CUPE BC. In 2022, we look to return to an in-person event, and we will focus on maintaining positive relationships with elected officials and promoting our work on childcare.

BC Library Association (BCLA)

The BCLA is a non-profit, cross-sectoral organization that furthers the interests of libraries and represents individual and institutional members. Memberships are offered to individuals, institutions, and supporters who share the organization's collective goals. As well as offering opportunities for discussion, debate, and activities related to libraries, the association provides professional development for members and advocates for issues that support members, libraries, and communities. After working with the former Executive Director (and former CUPE 391 member) Annette de Faveri for several years, building our partnership with the BCLA, we are thrilled to be working with Rina Hadziev, the new Executive Director, to continue working

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on our shared advocacy for library workers and services in all communities across the province, in all sectors.

CUPE's participation in BCLA's annual conference allows us the opportunity to connect with our members working in the sector and to discuss sector specific issues with other library advocates and supporters.

At the 2022 conference, our CUPE BC Library Committee will present a session, "*Library Services for Migrant, Undocumented, and Temporary Foreign Workers*," which will discuss ways that libraries currently work with people with precarious migration status, and explore why/what is keeping libraries from doing it in a more equitable, accessible, and effective manner. The panel will examine how a decolonizing approach empowers libraries and migrant communities to go beyond inclusion to solidarity.

As a platinum sponsor at BCLA's annual conference, we will be sponsoring the closing keynote speaker: *Gurdeep Pandher: Joy, Hope and Bhangra*.

In 2022, we are pleased to continue our partnership with BCLA for the BC Summer Reading Club. A \$50,000 contribution to the BC Summer Reading Club Program ensures that award medals are provided to children across the province who participate in this successful, inclusive, and much-loved program that encourages lifelong learning and supports the important development of literacy skills.

Defending Public Services

Strong Communities Working Group

Created roughly 20 years ago, the Strong Communities Working Group (SCWG) is a committee of CUPE National staff and CUPE BC elected officers dedicated to supporting the political and strategic work of the Division.

This group is tasked with monitoring emerging issues, keeping track of vacancies on various boards and agencies, staying on top of labour relations issues that may need external support,

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and carrying out campaigns to support our members across British Columbia. This working group is unique in CUPE, as no other Provincial Division or National Region work as closely to monitor and coordinate responses to issues affecting CUPE Locals and members. The committee is made up of the following members:

CUPE BC:

- President
- Secretary-Treasurer
- Four GVPs
- CUPE BC Executive Director

CUPE National Staff:

- Regional Director
- Assistant Regional Directors
- Legislative Coordinator
- Local Government Liaison
- Anti-Privatization Coordinator
- Local Community Organizer
- Representatives (one from each department):
 - Organizing
 - Union Development
 - Communications
 - Research
 - Administrative Support

Anti-Privatization Report

There are several key privatization threats facing CUPE members and our communities: major infrastructure projects, the future of the universal childcare program, and post-pandemic austerity measures. However, through proactive action and education CUPE members are well positioned to not only fend off privatization but proactively bring contracted out services back into the public sector. We continue to monitor the development of major infrastructure projects like the multi-billion dollar wastewater treatment facilities underway in the Lower Mainland and the Broadway subway line in Vancouver. We know that the federal infrastructure bank places

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significant pressure on lower levels of government to privatize many aspects of these projects. The future of B.C.'s new universal childcare program is largely unwritten. We continue to advocate strongly for a publicly delivered service that ensures high quality, accountability, and fair compensation and working conditions for childcare workers. We cannot accept the continued expansion of the existing fragmented patch-work private system that sustains itself on low wages and the exploitation of precarious workers. To that end, we are working tirelessly on a campaign for publicly provided childcare through B.C.'s public schools and other public bodies. By coming together and working in coordination across sectors, CUPE members can have a significant impact on what this new core public service will look like.

CUPE members identified early in the pandemic the need to watch for the signs of privatization and the implementation of an austerity agenda. Our members, particularly in libraries and recreation services, had to press employers to reopen libraries and community centres and not allow a permanent contraction of these vital services. While we are now several years into the pandemic and some of the most immediate concerns were addressed, we still need to be mindful that conservative politicians and interest groups are still likely to use the pandemic as an excuse to contract out or otherwise privatize important public services. This is particularly important in light of the local government elections we will see in B.C. this October. Locals and members have an opportunity to proactively support candidates who share our values and who will protect and expand publicly delivered services. Electing progressives to local governments and school boards requires a fraction of the energy and resources required to fight a major privatization scheme once it has begun.

We are continuing our efforts to promote Local efforts to protect public services and bring important services back in house. Strong Communities staff are working with Locals and other National Staff on proactive campaigns particularly in the post-secondary and municipal sectors.

Local 556 in the Comox Valley is engaged in a significant campaign to protect and expand public services in their region. The Local is using focus groups and polling to determine what are the most important issues in that area and how best to communicate with the public in the Comox Valley. Beyond creating a public opinion environment in support of public services and the need for well paid jobs in the community in advance of the local government election, the

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Local hopes to build towards a second stage of the campaign to bring some contracted out services, like waste collection, paving, and sidewalk construction, in house.

In the City of Burnaby, Local 23 has taken on the City's long-standing practice of contracting out traffic control/flagging and taking on inequality in the employer's operations. Traffic control workers are disproportionately women, they have low pay and exploitative working conditions. The City's pilot program that brought a group of contract workers in house as temporary full-time employees was a success and these workers have been regularized. The Local is now advocating for further expansion of this work group with the goal of eliminating all contracted out flagging. This is an excellent example of how challenging privatization has the potential to address broader equity issues in our society.

CUPE 3338 is playing a key role in an excellent campaign coalition focused on bringing contracted out custodial and food services back in house at Simon Fraser University. The *Contract Worker Justice* campaign is an alliance between the Local, UNITE HERE Local 40, faculty, students, and other employee groups on campus. The goal of the campaign is to restore these workers as direct employees of the university and to ensure that they are given the compensation and respect they deserve for their crucial contributions to the campus community. The potential for success is high and this campaign is already inspiring similar efforts at other post-secondary institutions.

The City of Surrey continues the transition from the RCMP to a municipal police force, which could have significant impacts on future City budgets. Given the experience of other communities with municipal police forces, we know that this means the City will have changes to their oversight and control over budget spending.

CUPE BC also continues our advocacy for the SkyTrain extension to UBC. This extension is a critical project for the well-being of the region. UBC is one of B.C.'s largest employers and sees 150,000 daily trips by travellers originating from a wide catchment area. Currently, only 80,000 of those trips use public transit with more than 1,000 busses flowing through the UBC transit exchange each day. Not only will the project help meet our climate targets, it will also expand affordable access to post-secondary education options for students, and provide greater

community access to the research facilities, medical health resources, and community services of the university.

Childcare Campaign

Through our childcare campaign, CUPE BC is pursuing our long-term vision of an accessible, affordable, and publicly delivered universal system of early care and learning embedded in the public school system. This will mean that B.C. families will have access to the childcare they need, and our members will be at the centre of delivering a much needed, high-quality public service that will make our society more just and equitable. We have committed significant resources to a cost share campaign with CUPE National. The cost share campaign has two complementary strategies to reach members of the public and influence decision makers. Working with communication and research firms, we have designed an ad campaign, including both traditional and digital media, to promote our vision for public childcare that takes into account the public's perceptions of privatization and their desires for a universal system. Through a series of short videos our campaign features the stories of our members struggling with childcare and also those members who work in childcare and deliver this valuable public service. We are also working to build grassroots support in communities across the province. Staff and member organizers are connecting with K-12 Locals and members to engage with parents' groups, Boards of Education, and their local Member of the Legislative Assembly. We are also coordinating with National Staff and Locals across sectors to make public childcare a priority at the bargaining table. CUPE BC continues to lobby the provincial government to articulate our plan for before and after school care in public schools as a low barrier and high reward investment in public childcare. We consistently articulate that it is critical for childcare to be delivered publicly to ensure universal access and the highest quality for kids and families. We are also working in coalition with others, like the \$10aDay Campaign, with whom we share a vision for childcare in B.C.

Organizing

Our 2021 Organizing Team consisted of Aaron Young, Elizabeth Locke, Tamara Laza and member organizers from every region of the province. Since last convention, we have welcomed the following members into our CUPE family:

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- CUPE Local 116: University of British Columbia – Residence Advisors
- CUPE Local 116: UBC – Drivers from the Centre for Accessibility (*pending variance by LRB*)
- CUPE Local 458: Chilliwack Crime Prevention Society – Community Programming
- CUPE Local 1004: PHS Community Services Society (PHS) – Nurses
- CUPE Local 1622: BC SPCA – Richmond Education & Adoption Centre
- CUPE Local 1760: United Way of BC – Social Services Workers
- CUPE Local 1936: WISH Drop-In Centre Society – Astoria Program Assistants
- CUPE Local 1936: Richmond Society for Community Living – Child & Infant Development
- CUPE Local 2086: Village of Granisle – Municipal Staff
- CUPE Local 2254: Village of Slocan – Municipal Staff
- CUPE Local 4951: Prince George Public Library – Library Workers

Working with Allies

Working with our allies and supporting other struggles is one of the most important roles we all have in the labour movement. It is, after all, what makes us a movement, and allows us to fight for those things that not only improve the broader bargaining context for all unionized workers, but also improve working conditions for all workers, and the communities we work in.

There are many organizations that share our values and have built strategic partnerships. These organizations share our concerns around fair and safe work, environmental protection and climate change, the value of public services, addressing poverty and inequality, and justice for migrants, Indigenous, and racialized people.

Below are just some of the partnerships and organizations CUPE BC supports throughout the year:

- BCLA Summer Reading Club Program (BC SRC)
 - The BC Summer Reading Club (BC SRC) is B.C.'s largest literacy program for children and families and encourages children to build their reading and literacy skills throughout the summer months. This important initiative is an accessible, diverse,

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and inclusive program that is developed and managed by the BC Library Association but grows from the work and commitment of individual libraries and staff, and flourishes because of community support and participation.

- BC Labour Heritage Centre (BCLHC)
 - The BCLHC Society preserves, documents, and presents the rich history of working people in British Columbia. The society engages in partnerships and projects that help define and express the role that work, and workers, have played in the evolution of social policy and its impact on the present and future shaping of the province.
 - Sarah Bjorknas was elected to represent CUPE BC on the Board of Directors for the BCLHC.
 - We are proud to sponsor the translation of 30 B.C. labour history lesson plans into French for the K-12 system for usable teaching resource materials for the BC Immersion and Francophone School Board teachers and their students.
- BC Health Coalition (BCHC)
 - CUPE BC continues to actively participate as a member of the BC Health Coalition and occupies a Labour Co-Chair position on the Coalition's Steering Committee. The BCHC works to keep health care public and accessible.
 - We are pleased to announce Tuesday Andrich from CUPE 1004 (PHS Community Services Society) will represent CUPE on the Steering Committee. We thank Tanya Paterson (National Rep) for serving on the committee from November 2020 – March 1, 2021.
- Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI)
 - The SCI's work focuses on regional issues carried out by Metro Vancouver (formerly the Greater Vancouver Regional District), TransLink, and Port Metro Vancouver. The project is funded by a partnership of several unions.
- CoDevelopment Canada (CoDev)
 - Please see the International Solidarity Committee's report for more detailed information about CoDevelopment Canada and CUPE BC's funding of their solidarity and partnership work in Latin America.

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- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)
 - We continue to support the work of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in their efforts to debunk methodologically flawed research from right-wing think tanks that continually attempt to vilify unions, unionized workers, and the public sector.
- Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCABC) & \$10aDay Plan
 - The \$10aDay Child Care Campaign is an initiative of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. The Campaign builds on the ongoing collaboration between the Coalition of Child Care Advocates and the Early Childhood Educators of BC to carry out public education activities related to the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning, or the \$10aDay Child Care Plan.
- Living Wage for Families
 - The Living Wage for Families Campaign encourages employers to pay a living wage as well as advocating for government policies that help families make ends meet. A living wage is the hourly amount a family needs to cover basic expenses.
- The Union Protein Project
 - This is a community partnership of B.C. trade unions to address the shortages of protein at B.C.'s food banks.
- BC Poverty Reduction Coalition (BCPRC)
 - The BCPRC is comprised of more than 100 organizations and community mobilizations that come together to advocate for public policy solutions to end poverty, homelessness, and inequality in B.C. We are proud to support their campaign for digital justice.

BC Federation of Labour (BCFED)

The BC Federation of Labour is one of the most important organizations where CUPE BC can influence the strategic direction of the labour movement. The Executive Council of the BCFED is the highest decision-making body in the B.C. labour movement. Your representative is Karen Ranalletta (Executive Officer) and she is joined by Trevor Davies, Ann Lennarson, Zoë Magnus, and Michelle Waite. We are also proud to support Sheryl Burns (CUPE Local 1936), who is the

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elected equality representative for persons with disabilities. Brother Frank Lee (CUPE Local 1004) was also re-elected as one of the three Trustees.

We also have several CUPE BC members and CUPE National Staff who represent us on various BCFED committees. This participation ensures that CUPE members are well represented. These committees are as follows: Apprenticeship and Skills Training Working Group, Climate Change, Community and Social Action, Education, Human Rights, Occupational Health and Safety, Political Action, Precarious Workers Working Group, Public Sector Bargaining Working Group, Women and Gender Rights, and Young Workers'.

Highlights of our work with the BC Federation of Labour over the past two years include:

- B.C.'s Economic Recovery
 - CUPE BC attended several meetings to strategize with the labour movement on how to maximize our participation and input on several roundtables with the provincial government. This included meetings with the officers of the BCFED on topics like women in leadership, coming out of COVID-19, lobbying on 10 employer paid sick days, and unions and B.C.'s economic recovery.
- International Day for Persons with Disabilities
 - December 3, 2021 – CUPE BC supported an International Day of Persons with Disabilities Virtual event, organized by the BC Federation of Labour. The event, titled *Not All Disabilities Are Visible*, was hosted by Sheryl Burns, BCFED Representative for Workers with Disabilities, with guest, Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility Dan Coulter (and former President of CUPE 3787 – BC NDP Staff). Performances include music by Kristina Sheldon and spoken word by Olivia Dixon.

Community Events

In the absence of large public gatherings during the second year of COVID-19, the BC Division switched gears and altered its public presence from community events to more direct contact with CUPE members and other organizations. These included:

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- CUPE BC President Profiles: Traveling through the province and meeting with Local executives, Karen began a new feature on the Division's Facebook page in which she introduced a different CUPE Local president for each post.
- Solidarity Pickets: UNITE HERE! Local 40 lockout at the Hilton, BCGEU Island libraries strike, IBEW 213 strike at Ledcor
- Other Union Conventions: chairing the HEU convention, bringing greetings to the BCTF convention
- Other Organizations' Events: Union of BC Municipalities convention (online), Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) annual general meeting
- Rallies and Events: Save the PNE (CUPE 1004), February 14th Annual Women's Memorial March in the Downtown East Side, rally in Victoria in support of 10 paid sick days (BCFED), Red Dress event in Bear Creek Park in Surrey, Every Child Matters event on July 1, vigil to commemorate a family killed in Ontario as a result of Islamophobia

CUPE BC Community Events Trailer

At the February executive board meeting a decision was made to transition from the aging community events truck and trailer (CETT) to a new community events vehicle. The process is expected to take a few months as we order and outfit the new vehicle, which will hopefully be ready by the fall. In the interim, CUPE BC can offer other support to ensure that we have a presence at community events. If you have an event where you would like a CUPE presence, please contact Carissa Taylor, Local Community Organizer, at caritaylor@cupe.ca, to discuss which options will best support your event.

CUPE BC Committees and Task Force

CUPE BC's committees are critical in reporting and advising the CUPE BC Executive Board around a variety of issues and concerns of our union and its members. Currently, we have 21 committees and one task force.

Committees

More than 200 members from across the province have participated in our committees, with diverse geographic, sectoral, gender, and equity representation.

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The role of the committees is to identify issues that require action by CUPE BC and develop potential solutions for consideration by the Executive Board or convention. Committees also connect with community groups and activists who are working on similar issues and represent CUPE BC at community events.

Each committee has a two-year term, and committee appointments are made following our convention. CUPE BC appoints committee members based on recommendations from affiliated Locals and District Councils. Committee membership is further reflected by each committee's Terms of Reference. Final determination of these appointments is made by the CUPE BC Executive Board.

Every other year – the same year committees are formed – CUPE BC hosts the “One Big Committee Meeting” (OBCM), where new committee members receive orientation and each committee holds its inaugural meeting. In 2021, this even was held virtually. During that OBCM, committee members developed strategic plans for their committees, laying out their work for their two-year term and supporting CUPE BC's objectives and any relevant resolutions passed at the past convention.

Committee reports are reviewed at the quarterly Executive Board meetings and each committee and task force reports annually at convention. All committee reports are included in your kits. We encourage you to read them and learn more about the important work each committee has undertaken.

Convention Review Task Force (CRTF)

The CUPE BC Convention Review Task Force met repeatedly to fulfill their mandate to report on and provide recommendations to improve delegate experiences at CUPE BC Convention as per Resolution 112, passed at the 2019 Convention.

A Convention Review Task Force Report, which outlined delegate feedback and experiences provided through a survey of previous convention delegate participants, along with recommendations, was prepared for presentation at the 2020 CUPE BC Convention. This convention was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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In response to Public Health Officer recommendations and a commitment to keep CUPE BC members safe, CUPE BC opted to host its 2021 CUPE BC Convention virtually. The Convention Review Task Force recognized that a virtual convention may create new and additional challenges not previously anticipated in a pre-COVID world. The task force met following the virtual convention to add additional content relevant to virtual events. A final Convention Review Task Force Report will be presented for delegate input and receipt at the 2022 CUPE BC Convention. Recommendations found in this report should be reviewed by delegates and, in the future, consider supporting resolutions that enact the recommendations.

This report is the result of extensive work from committee members and staff. Sheryl Burns deserves special recognition for chairing a task force that originally was expected to conclude its work in one year, not three.

CUPE Health Care Presidents' Council (HCPC)

The CUPE Health Care Presidents Council is represented by presidents and delegates from CUPE Locals 15, 1004, 1978, 3403-01, and 4816. Each of these Locals represents members within the two provincial Community Health collective agreements in B.C.: the Community Bargaining Association (CBA) and the Health Science Professionals' Bargaining Association (HSPBA). Combined, these CUPE Locals represent just over 1200 members in the CBA and approximately 800 HSPBA members, an approximate total of 2000 members in CUPE's Health sector. The HCPC meets a minimum of four times a year and is tasked with supporting CUPE, HSPBA, and CBA collective bargaining, contract enforcement, furthering common objectives faced by CUPE members in these bargaining associations and promoting and defending our system of publicly funded and publicly delivered health care.

In the past year, the HCPC has prepared and continues to engage in the collective bargaining process with both the CBA and the HSPBA. Bargaining for both associations continues with the Health Employers Association of British Columbia.

The HCPC has also led a Cost Share initiative designed to raise the profile of the vital services that health sector workers have provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among other elements, a video titled "*Caring in a Pandemic*" was produced. It features a series of member

interviews that are true accounts of the challenges health sector workers have been exposed to during the pandemic, how it has impacted them, coping mechanisms that they have adopted in order to continue, and how they felt employers could have managed matters differently.

Diversity and Inclusion – EDI Action Plan

One of the more disturbing results of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a rise in the number of racist incidents targeting people of colour. Systemic racism has always been with us, but such incidents – everything from white supremacist hate speech on social media to random attacks on public transit, anti-Asian racist graffiti, and police targeting of Black or Indigenous people – remind us how pervasive and deeply rooted bigotry has become in our society.

It is our collective responsibility to end systemic racism. For this reason, CUPE BC literally put its money where its mouth is in the fall of 2020, when the Division retained the services of a diversity and inclusion consulting firm to conduct an equity audit of all the Union's operations. Recognizing that organizational culture reinforces systemic racism, CUPE BC hired Vancouver-based Bakau Consulting to conduct a full review of the Union's operations through an equity lens.

Diversity and Inclusion Audit

The internal equity audit, which covers everything from policy and strategy development to unconscious bias training, will examine how CUPE BC operates, including how events and meetings are organized. In looking for issues of systemic racism and discrimination, the review will conclude with recommendations for change in areas identified as needing improvement. The recommendations stemming from the report will assist CUPE BC in eliminating barriers to participation in our Union as well as achieving equity for all of our members.

Working with our National Union

With its membership now exceeding 700,000 and its strike fund at more than \$100 million, CUPE National is more prepared than ever to stand up for members across the country and continue to fight for a better Canada for all workers.

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In November 2021, CUPE National held its biennial convention virtually, where Mark Hancock was acclaimed as President and Candace Rennick was acclaimed as our new Secretary-Treasurer. We also supported the election of Lee-Ann Kalen from Alberta as the General Vice President representing B.C., Alberta, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. We thank them all for their ongoing support of the work we do in British Columbia.

CUPE BC members are represented on the National Executive Board by Karen Ranalletta and the Hospital Employees' Union President Barb Nederpel, both elected as Regional Vice-Presidents, and Debra Merrier, who was elected to serve as a Diversity Vice-President (Indigenous Workers).

CUPE Local 374 President Shireen Clark served three years as a National Trustee and did not re-offer. For the first time in our history, we elected a National Trustee from the HEU to represent B.C. – big thank you to Talita Dekker for representing all of us in B.C.!

In our region we are extremely proud of the good working relationship CUPE BC has with the leadership and all of the CUPE National Staff who support our Locals. We couldn't accomplish all the work that we do without the support of CUPE National and the BC Region.

We want to thank all the Servicing Representatives and Specialist Representatives - including Communications, Legal, Research, Union Development, Health and Safety, Job Evaluation, and Human Rights – and the administrative support staff in all the offices around the province for their support, expertise, and commitment to our members.

We also want to take a moment to welcome new Regional Director Ann Lennarson who started July 2021. She is no stranger to CUPE – she comes to us with over 30 years in the Union. She started as a legal rep and has worked in several capacities including in Union Education, as the mentor rep, and as an Assistant Regional Director in Ontario.

In addition to Ann, we also want to thank Assistant Regional Directors Rob Jandric and Zoë Magnus, for their leadership in our region.

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We look forward to continuing our work together over the next year to take on important challenges on behalf of all our 100,000 members across the province.

CUPE BC – In Memoriam

Graham Tonks

Since our last convention, we have lost one of our Local presidents, Graham Tonks (1987-2022), President of CUPE 798 (Local, municipal, regional and library workers of Powell River). Graham was a Level 3 Treatment Operator in the Waterworks department for several years. He served on the Local's executive since 2012 and became president in 2016.

A natural organizer, he worked to bring in new workers and fought for his members while maintaining respectful relationships with his employers. Fairness was a value he lived by – whether it was at the bargaining table, in various labour relations dealings, or while paving the way for pay equity, he was equally passionate about all. He will be greatly missed by our CUPE BC family.

Our Employees

Finally, we must thank those who work directly for CUPE BC. Executive Director Kiran Kooner works directly with the elected officers of CUPE BC and the Executive Board and is responsible for implementing all CUPE BC events and overseeing the administrative and accounting staff team.

Kiran has made a positive impact on our organization by implementing new training priorities for staff and introducing new project management tools to help ensure we stay organized and efficiently deliver on our commitments to Locals and our members.

Our administrative assistants – Darci Schmid, Chika Buston, Pearly Kheriwal, Morgan McCrystal, and Maja Bohinc – are invaluable to running our office and many of our CUPE BC events. Every committee meeting, board meeting, conference, convention, mail-out, etc. happens because of their hard work. Recognizing the growth that CUPE BC has seen over the

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last number of years, we will be adding an additional full-time administrative assistant this year to better support the work of the Division.

CUPE BC has two dedicated accounting staff: Wendy Monkhouse and Jolanta Osowska. They are fully responsible for financial and accounting operations and always ensure best practises are implemented and maintained for CUPE BC and its members.

We are pleased to announce that this year, CUPE BC was recognized as one of BC's Top Employers for 2022. The award is a special designation that recognizes the British Columbia employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work.

It is incredible, the volume of work done by our small and mighty team. We greatly appreciate the expertise and dedication of all our staff on behalf of the Executive Board and CUPE members.

Conclusion

The past year has been a year full of challenges and opportunities. With new leadership at CUPE BC and the BC Region we have worked collaboratively to support our members and Locals. Throughout the pandemic, disasters, and labour relations hardships, what gives us our greatest strength is the resolve of our members. Our members who have worked on the front lines, providing the critical services our communities rely on. Everything we do at CUPE BC will put the needs of members and our Locals first, and we look forward to facing the challenges of 2022 together.

Thank you for all the work you do to make our Union great.

In solidarity

The Executive Board of CUPE BC

April 2022

