

## News Release

For Immediate Release

August 29, 2019

### School district deeply concerned at CUPE strike notice

Saanichton – “The Board of Education is deeply concerned that CUPE Local 441 has recently announced a successful strike vote,” said Board Vice-Chair Elsie McMurphy.

“It’s important that we retain our focus on the needs of the students in our public schools and ensure that their education is not interrupted by a labour dispute,” said Ms. McMurphy. “The provisions we have put forward to the union not only address some pressing issues specific to our School District but are also consistent with the provisions agreed to by other CUPE locals in other school districts throughout the province, as well as other unions in the broader public sector.”

“The issue of wage competitiveness with other local school districts remains a concern to both CUPE and the Board, and the Board has worked diligently to propose reallocation of other monies available within the collective agreement to provide wage increases in excess of 6% over three years,” said Ms. McMurphy.

Consistent with the compensation mandate established by the provincial government for public sector bargaining, the Board proposed re-allocating other monies available within the collective agreement to address labour market competitiveness issues with our neighbouring school districts.

“With this proposal, those jobs that are the farthest behind our neighbours in terms of hourly wage would receive a larger additional wage increase than jobs that are less affected,” said Ms. McMurphy. “The jobs that are furthest behind our neighbours include female-dominated jobs such as Education Assistants, clerical, etc. The proposed offer maximized any monies that could be allocated from the collective agreement in addition to the provincial bargaining mandate. Unfortunately, the Union bargaining committee rejected the proposal.”

“We sincerely hope that the union will recognize that the School District is being fair and consistent in its approach and return to the bargaining table to continue working towards concluding an agreement.”

The school district was in the process of concluding the locally negotiated provisions of the collective agreement with CUPE Local 441 consistent with the Provincial Framework Agreement, which, in addition to other matters, provides for general wage increases of 6% over the three-year term of the agreement. (In September 2018, the employers’ bargaining agent, the BC Public School Employers’ Association, concluded a three-year Provincial Framework Agreement with support staff unions, including CUPE, which the parties recommended to their members for ratification.)

For more information, contact:

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