



February 14, 2025

Dear Sturgeon Public Stakeholders,

Yesterday, we met with the CUPE Local 4625 bargaining committee for the entire day to try to reach a settlement agreement. We are writing this letter to ensure all stakeholders have the relevant information to date.

We presented a comprehensive offer that we believe is a strong step forward, especially considering the current economic realities, to address the needs of our support staff and the students we serve. The proposal includes wage increases of **17% (18.25% compounded)** over the next 3.5 years. The full details of the “*Employer Mediation Proposal for Settlement*” offered by Sturgeon Public School Division is attached.

At the conclusion of the day yesterday, the Division requested a counter offer by midday today, February 14, 2025. CUPE Local 4625 did communicate its interest in presenting the Division with a counter proposal, however, the Division is still awaiting a response.

The Division feels that local context is important and hopes its Local CUPE 4625 takes this offer earnestly as it is unprecedented at many bargaining tables.

Summary details of the Division's offer:

This offer is set to expire on August 31, 2028, which is 3.5 years from today. It provides stability and certainty. It includes:

- **Significant wage increases:** Guaranteed wage increases of **17% (18.25% compounded)** over the term of the agreement.
- **If accepted today,** staff would see at minimum an **immediate 8.75%** increase in wages. Followed by a **guaranteed further 8.25%** over the next 3.5 years.
- **Grid Reclassification:** Eliminate a step in the wage grid so staff will reach the top of the grid faster, allowing them to earn a higher wage. This will also increase the casual rate by 5.3%.
- **Benefit Package:** An increase to the Health Spending Account (HSA) to \$550 per year. This is in addition to the 92% premium coverage that the Division pays on behalf of CUPE staff for their comprehensive benefit and retirement package.





- **General Holiday:** The addition of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a general holiday.
- **Personal Days:** Staff will have the ability to carry forward an additional personal day, allowing them to accumulate up to three personal days.

Investing in Support Staff

This offer represents a significant financial commitment from the Division. We recognize the value of support staff and believe this agreement will provide stability for everyone involved.

Comprehensive Benefit Package

Many of you may not be aware that the majority of CUPE positions work on average 190 days per year and that the Division has a comprehensive benefit package. The benefit package costs the Division **an additional 30% on top of wages**. The majority of the package includes:

- A robust Extended Health Care Plan, Dental Plan, Life Insurance Plan and Extended Disability Plan, that is 92% covered by the employer.
- Health Spending Account 100% employer covered.
- Local Authorities Pension Plan, in which the employer matches 100% contributions as well as paying an extra 1% of wages.
- Employee Family Assistance Program 100% employer covered.

In addition, 4% to 12% vacation pay is provided on top of wages. The Division offers several paid leaves which include sick leave, critical illness leave, personal leave, a day to write an academic or professional course exam, a day to attend the convocation from a post secondary institution of a child or spouse and more.

Our collective commitment

We are all invested in the success of students. We urge the Local to provide a reasonable counter offer and return to the bargaining table, so we can work together towards an agreement that values support staff and provides the stability and support students deserve.

Sincerely,

Shawna Warren M.Ed.
Superintendent

Attachment:
Employer Mediation Proposal for Settlement



In Negotiations

BETWEEN The Sturgeon Public School Division,
hereinafter called "The Employer"

and

AND CUPE, Local 4625,
hereinafter called "The Union"

EMPLOYER Mediation Proposal for Settlement

February 13, 2025

These items are submitted without prejudice to any future proposed amendments or additions, and subject to any errors or omissions. The Employer reserves the right to amend or withdraw its proposals or to introduce counter-proposals to the Union's proposals during negotiations.

The Employer's proposal in respect to the Union is to renew the Collective Agreement with the changes as outlined in the following proposal.

On **June 27, 2022** the parties first met to begin negotiations. After a single day of talks, most items were agreed to and we scheduled to meet again on **October 17, 2022**. The School Division assumed this next meeting was when the Union would finally be in a position to discuss salary increases and we could finalize a deal; instead the Union cancelled this meeting with very little notice.

The Employer attempted on numerous occasions to continue bargaining however, CUPE failed to agree to dates.

The parties **finally** met again on **January 23, 2024, 16 months** following CUPE's **cancelled** meeting, and **20 months** after our first bargaining session. Despite this delay, the Union was not prepared to bargain, and an application was made to move forward with mediation.

A year later we now find ourselves 5 weeks into job action where a mediator's recommendation has been issued but the Union did not allow our staff the opportunity to vote.

Sturgeon Public Schools (SPS) remains **frustrated with the false narrative** the Union is communicating to our employees regarding CUPE National's role in the strike. SPS considers it disingenuous when representatives for the Union understate the Employer's need to file a cease-and-desist application with the Alberta Labour Relations Board as simply an action related to "reach(ing) agreements during labour disputes". **To be clear**, the Division's concern was the **safety and security of the students who were witness to the CUPE member's actions** and this is where SPS felt it was necessary to intervene on their behalf.

Today we are proposing a **17% (18.25% compounded)** settlement offer that promotes labour peace, an end to the strike and stability until **August 31, 2028**. This further **3.5-year proposal** represents a fair, market-based wage settlement that balances the needs and priorities of our staff with fiscal sustainability, and the Division's broader obligations to parents, students and the community.

Put in other terms, should CUPE Leadership recommend to our staff acceptance of this deal, each employee would receive **at least an immediate 8.75% increase in their pay** – something we think is a far better alternative to continuing this prolonged job action.

SPS requests National CUPE Leadership allow our staff the opportunity to engage in discussions and present a reasonable, evidence based monetary proposal to the Employer; a proposal that acknowledges the settlement history that **34 other CUPE locals** have already agreed to, and one that aligns with a settlement framework that **CUPE Local 474 Custodians** were able to achieve with Edmonton Public Schools.

SPS values the contributions of all our staff to our educational community and are open to further discussions.

The following comprehensive proposal for settlement largely represents the Recommendations issued by **Mediator Opatril on September 21, 2024**, as well as the items the parties have already agreed to in June 2022. While SPS has had to rescind its ratification of the previous Recommendations, the Division is confident that the items included in both his report, and this proposal represent a 'workable solution' for the items in dispute that he was attempting to resolve.

Any retroactive payments will be processed within 120 Calendar Days of ratification of a new collective agreement.

10.0 PAY CLASSIFICATIONS & PAY SCALES

Effective until March 31, 2024

Pay Classifications	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	17.87	18.82	19.79	20.72	21.68	22.64
2	18.82	19.79	20.72	21.68	22.64	23.57
3	19.79	20.72	21.68	22.64	23.57	24.54
4	24.41	25.78	27.14	28.51	29.86	31.23

Effective February 1, 2024 (2.75% General Wage Increase)

Pay Classifications	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	\$18.36	\$19.34	\$20.33	\$21.29	\$22.28	\$23.26
2	\$19.34	\$20.33	\$21.29	\$22.28	\$23.26	\$24.22
3	\$20.33	\$21.29	\$22.28	\$23.26	\$24.22	\$25.21
4	\$25.08	\$26.49	\$27.89	\$29.29	\$30.68	\$32.09

Effective First pay period following ratification by the parties: removal first step and add 6.1% to the salary grids (3% market adjustment and add 3% for General Wage Increase Compounded).

Pay Classifications	4	2 1	3 2	4 3	5 4	6 5
1	\$18.36	\$20.52	\$21.57	\$22.59	\$23.63	\$24.68
2	\$19.34	\$21.57	\$22.59	\$23.63	\$24.68	\$25.69
3	\$20.33	\$22.59	\$23.63	\$24.68	\$25.69	\$26.75
4	\$25.08	\$28.10	\$29.58	\$31.08	\$32.55	\$34.04

Effective September 1, 2025 or the first pay period following ratification by the parties – whichever is later: a 3% General Wage Increase.

Pay Classifications	1	2	3	4	5
1	\$21.13	\$22.22	\$23.26	\$24.34	\$25.42
2	\$22.22	\$23.26	\$24.34	\$25.42	\$26.46
3	\$23.26	\$24.34	\$25.42	\$26.46	\$27.55
4	\$28.95	\$30.47	\$32.01	\$33.53	\$35.06

Effective September 1, 2026 or the first pay period following ratification by the parties – whichever is later: a 2.75% General Wage Increase.

Pay Classifications	1	2	3	4	5
1	\$21.71	\$22.83	\$23.90	\$25.01	\$26.12
2	\$22.83	\$23.90	\$25.01	\$26.12	\$27.19
3	\$23.90	\$25.01	\$26.12	\$27.19	\$28.31
4	\$29.74	\$31.31	\$32.89	\$34.45	\$36.03

Effective September 1, 2027 or the first pay period following ratification by the parties – whichever is later: a 2.5% General Wage Increase.

Pay Classifications	1	2	3	4	5
1	\$22.25	\$23.40	\$24.50	\$25.64	\$26.77
2	\$23.40	\$24.50	\$25.64	\$26.77	\$27.87
3	\$24.50	\$25.64	\$26.77	\$27.87	\$29.02
4	\$30.48	\$32.09	\$33.71	\$35.31	\$36.93

2.0 DURATION AND TERM OF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

2.4 Either party desiring to amend or terminate this Agreement will give notice in writing to the other not less than sixty (60) nor more than one hundred and twenty (120) days immediately preceding the termination of this Agreement. In the event the foregoing notice is served, the parties will commence collective bargaining within 30 days of receipt of such notice.

Note: This time limit is waived for the next round of negotiations only. For the Collective Agreement that will commence September 1, 2020, either party may serve Notice to Bargain, and bargaining will commence at a mutually agreeable date.

10.0 PAY CLASSIFICATIONS & PAY SCALES

PAY CLASSIFICATIONS

Pay Group 3	Library Technician Administrative Assistant Cafeteria Technician Accounts Clerk Educational Assistant 3 Educational Assistant 3/Cosmetology Educational Assistant 3/High School Science Nutrition Coordinator
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12.0 GENERAL HOLIDAYS

- 12.3 All hours worked by an employee will be recorded in ~~SRB report~~ **Employee Self Service (ESS)**.
- 12.4 All employees will receive the following holidays with pay provided the relevant provisions of the Employment Standards Code are met:

New Year's Day	Labour Day
Alberta Family Day	Thanksgiving Day
Good Friday	Remembrance Day
Easter Monday	Christmas Day
Victoria Day	Boxing Day
Canada Day	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

13.0 VACATION PAY

- 13.3 An employee earns vacation ~~leave~~ **pay** as follows:

15.0 TIME OFF IN LIEU OF EXTRA HOURS WORKED

- 15.3 Time off in lieu of extra hours worked will be ~~included on the employee's~~ **entered into SRB report Employee Self Service (ESS)** and taken within the school year in which it is earned.

16.0 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- 16.1 Participation in the Extended Disability and Life **Insurance Plans** will be a condition of employment for all employees working twenty (20) hours or more per week in a permanent position or a temporary position greater than three (3) months duration.
- 16.1.1 The Employer will administer a Life Insurance Plan and will pay the premiums to a maximum of ~~920%~~ **920%** of the cost of the premiums. ~~Effective the first day of the month following ratification, the Employer will administer a Life Insurance Plan and will pay the premiums to a maximum of 92% of the cost of the premiums.~~
- 16.1.2 The Employer will administer an Extended Disability Plan and will pay the premiums to a maximum of ~~920%~~ **920%** of the cost of the premiums. ~~Effective the first day of the month following ratification, the Employer will administer an Extended Disability Plan and will pay the premiums to a maximum of 92% of the cost of the premiums.~~
- 16.2 Participation in ~~the~~ **Dental Care Plan** will be a condition of employment for all employees working twenty (20) hours or more per week, except an employee may waive participation by stating that they have coverage through their spouse.
- 16.2.1 The Employer will administer a Dental Care **Plan** and will pay the premiums to a maximum of ~~920%~~ **920%** of the cost of the premiums. ~~Effective the first day of the month following ratification, the Employer will administer a Dental Care plan and will pay~~

~~the premiums to a maximum of 92% of the cost of the premiums.~~

16.3 The Employer will administer an Extended Health Care Plan and will pay ~~92%~~ **920%** of the cost of the premiums. ~~Effective the first day of the month following ratification, the Employer will administer an Extended Health Care Plan and will pay 92% of the cost of the premiums.~~

16.5 The Employer will provide for each employee working twenty (20) hours or more per week a Health Spending Account that adheres to Revenue Canada requirements. The Health Spending Account will be ~~\$450~~ **\$385** per full-time employee and administered for other employees in accordance with ~~16.56~~ **16.6** of this Agreement. ~~Effective the first day of the month following ratification, the Health Spending Account will be \$450 per full-time employee and administered for other employees in accordance with 16.6 of this Agreement.~~ **Effective the first day of the month following ratification the Health Spending Account will be \$550 per full-time employee and administered for other employees in accordance with 16.6 of this Agreement.**

18.0 SICK LEAVE

18.5 A medical certificate (see Appendix A) may be required by The Employer for any absence due to illness exceeding three (3) days. The Employer will be entitled to require, at any time, an examination by a ~~doctor or dentist~~ **medical professional** selected by The Employer at the Employer's expense.

ARTICLE 20 LEAVES OF ABSENCE

20.6.1.4 For one (1) operational day for other personal reasons. Unused days may be accumulated to a maximum of ~~two (2)~~ **three (3)** days. Such leave will not be used to extend a vacation period or a long weekend without the prior approval of the Employer. The number of employees accessing this Clause from a school on any one day will not exceed 20% of the school's support staff. Leaves under this Clause will be granted on a first come first served basis.

ARTICLE 21 REDUCTION IN SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Layoff

21.1 A layoff will be defined as a reduction of more than ~~one-third (1/3)~~ **one quarter (1/4)** of an employee's regular hours of work as defined in this Agreement. In the event of lay-off, employees will be retained on the basis of seniority provided they have the required ability and qualifications to do the work required.

Letter of Understanding

The parties agree to removed the Letter of Understanding – Joint Benefits Review Committee

Letter of Intent

The parties agree to removed the Letter of Intent – Joint Job Description Review Committee