

# ECSSA News

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

January 2012



## President's Message

Welcome back and Happy New Year. The *Kids not Cuts* coalition which brings together all support staff in the K-12 system across the province through our unions, CEP and CUPE have been hard at work. As you know, the coalition formed through immediate concerns over underfunding and cuts to K-12. While concerned Albertans and advocacy groups – including Kids Not Cuts Alberta – have succeeded in having the \$107 million in government cuts restored for this year, we continue to advocate for excellent education funding for all of our K-12 students.

One of our recent achievements was garnering a face to face audience with current Education Minister at the provincial Legislature.

### **Meeting with the Education Minister January 10, 2012**

Present at the table were Danny Burrell, Elaine Lyttle Cardinal, Laura Fogden, Katy Rubis, Don Boucher CEP Western Region Administrative Vice-President, Marle Roberts President of CUPE Alberta. Thank you to Laura Fogden and Katy Rubis who shared great ideas with us.

During the hour we spent meeting with the minister, we were able to articulate the importance of the work of educational support staff in ensuring inclusive educational outcomes for all students. This meeting is the first of its kind, where a sitting Education minister has met with a body representing all support staff in the province across all unions. In addition to the meeting itself, I am proud to report back on the following outcomes of our meeting:

The minister has agreed to continue to meet with Kids Not Cuts and support staff on an ongoing basis, so that we can provide him with our unique perspective on educational needs in Alberta

We reached an agreement with the minister that he and his staff will begin using the term school support staff in future ministerial correspondences.

He will be sending us detailed information on education funding that we look forward to sharing with you.

Celebrate what you want to see more of.

[Tom Peters](#)

### **Making Things Happen: We need your help!**

As we move closer to the spring election the coalition will be requesting volunteers to help with political action. Don't be afraid to say yes when we tap you on the shoulder.

In Solidarity  
Wilma Ellenburgh  
CEP Local 52 A  
ECSSA President

## Executive Roles Continued

Unions are organizations where the members work together to solve problems. The employer is always included and welcomed in the process to achieve solutions. It is the job of the executive to coordinate these activities, and to ensure that the members have adequate information, advice and funds to deal effectively with concerns.

From now until the end of the year I have decided to give you a snapshot of what specifically each executive member's job is. I hope this will give you a better idea as to the amount of dedication and extra hours it takes to be part of the executive.

The Employer Liaison Officer is a paid position within our local. I am seconded by our local at a 0.6 FTE to provide services to you, our members. As outlined in our bylaws my duties are:

- a) to report to the Executive
- b) to attend all Board of Directors meetings
- c) to participate in negotiations and liaison meetings
- d) to manage all grievances and disciplinary actions
- e) to handle all membership inquiries as to Local activities and the interpretation of the Collective Agreement
- f) to serve on committees as required by the President and/or the Board of Directors
- g) to publish and distribute a monthly newsletter to all members
- h) to act as a liaison between the membership and the School District
- i) to attend all National Conventions
- j) to maintain the ECSSA website
- k) to monitor and update By-Laws as needed
- l) To communicate with the membership as directed by the Executive and Board of Directors
- m) To provide access to union education and information sessions to the membership

After working at my school board job during the day, I come home and go down to the ECSSA office in my home. I then check the phone and emails and answer your questions about job conditions, FTE time, coffee breaks, possible harassment, and help connect you to the correct people working downtown for questions about pensions, health benefits etc. Smart phones, emails and meetings comprise a large part of my job. I meet regularly with your executive and also with the District's HR team. I also on occasion will meet with a member to discuss issues and help solve work place conflicts. I am also there for you in the case of a discipline meeting with your supervisor.

I am also the person who puts together the newsletter and then sends it to our wonderful editor, Janice Bowman, to make it look and sound professional. Part of this responsibility is to come up with the cookie question for our newsletter. Delivering the cookies to the lucky winners is one of the best jobs ever! This month's contest is about this article. To be enter the draw please email your name, site and the answer to this question to [ecssa@shaw.ca](mailto:ecssa@shaw.ca) "What is one of the duties of the Employer Liaison Officer?" Individual entries only, winners will be picked by a random draw. Lets make the deadline, February 2nd.

Our big campaign to ensure that there will be proper funding for our special needs students has been one of the projects I have been directed to work on this year. This has been an exciting time working with the Alberta Federation of Labour, Public Interest Alberta and other stakeholders to get our message out to all Albertans. It has meant many meetings, letter writing, emails and phone calls with the stakeholders and our elected representatives.

As it is inappropriate to discuss union business during work time, please feel free to phone and email after school hours. And with this in mind, please do not call my ECS number with union questions. But please remember if you are not sure if you should phone, phone:

**780 456 3277**

## Ginormous Thanks to all:

ECSSA members have done it once again. Your loving and giving hearts have made it possible for sixty young people to have a gift this Christmas. Your support for ECSSA's Social Justice Christmas Project brought in a grand total of 3,000.00 dollars for Adopt-a-Teen.

Please give yourself an enormous bear hug. We could not have our children in more loving hands than yours.

I would like to give out a special thank you to our Board of Directors for their extra support.

Please watch for ECSSA's upcoming Spring Social Justice Project.

*ECSSA's Social Justice Committee would like to wish you and your family a Blessed and Merry Christmas :)*

Elaine Cardinal

[Elaine.Lyttle-Cardinal@ecsd.net](mailto:Elaine.Lyttle-Cardinal@ecsd.net)

Educational Special Needs Assistant

### CEP Scholarships

Once again our National Union is offering scholarships. Local 52-A ECSSA members have been very successful in the past in being honoured with these scholarships.

Please check our Website for more information and entry forms

[www.ecssa.ca](http://www.ecssa.ca)

### Negotiation Update

At this time we are still in conversation with the District. We will be giving an update at our General Meeting in February.

February 8, 2012  
St. Joseph School

### Caring Report

We extend our prayers and sympathies to Michelle Zarowney of Bishop Savaryn on the passing of her grandmother, Janine Campbell of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on the loss of her father and Janice Bowman on the loss of her step father.

Flowers and wishes for a speedy recovery were sent to Bev Gregory of St. Joseph, Nycole Kindree of Financial Services and Patricia Burke Dodds of St. Clement.

I need to send my apologies to Nellie Siva of St. Edmund on my mistake made in last month's newsletter. It was incorrectly reported that Nellie had lost her father, when she had lost her husband. I apologize to Nellie and her family for any pain this has caused.

*Please remember to notify ECSSA if someone at your site has experienced a loss or is ill. The caring forms can be found on our website [www.ecssa.ca](http://www.ecssa.ca) and then click on the "Newsletter and Caring Forms" link. Please ensure that all information requested on the form is filled out. Thank*

#### **Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association**

**P.O. Box 1323  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 2N2**

Phone: 456 ECSS (3277)

Fax: 473.3277

E-Mail: [ecssa@shaw.ca](mailto:ecssa@shaw.ca)

Website: [www.ecssa.ca](http://www.ecssa.ca)

*Support Staff*

*The glue that holds it all together!!*