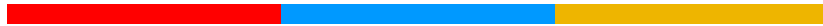


CUPE EDUCATION WORKERS

**MAKING SCHOOLS WORK**



**CUPE**  
**Whole Schools**  
**lobby kit**



## **It takes a whole school to educate a child: increase funding to Ontario's schools.**

CUPE represents over 55,000 education workers in Ontario. We are instructors, custodians, tradespeople, clerical staff, library workers, IT staff, early childhood educators, educational assistants, and so much more. Every day we see the impacts of the under-funding of Ontario's schools.

Our "whole schools" campaign calls on government and school boards to fund the education system based on the true cost of delivery of all services.

We are asking for a full, comprehensive, review of the funding formula, with appropriate public consultations.

Please take the time to review this lobby kit before you meet with your MPP.

Included is information about why we need to increase funding, our key messages, and general tips for lobbying.

### **What Do We Want to Say?**

#### **Key Messages:**

**What is a "whole school"?** A whole school includes not just teachers, but also custodians, clerical staff, educational assistants, early childhood educators, tradespeople, the physical infrastructure needs of the school, and so much more. A whole school is fully funded so that boards are not having to cut office staff, for instance, in order to make physical repairs.

A whole school can budget for the actual number of services and staff required to provide students with a complete education.

**The government must undertake a full, comprehensive, public review of the funding formula and the ways it falls short.**

**The government needs to fund the true cost of delivering services.**

The government should fund each school based on its actual needs. This means identifying and funding all the staff necessary to provide a complete educational experience. A fully functioning school needs to have all mandated programmes funded, and needs to provide maintenance budgets based on actual infrastructural and renewal needs. Special needs assessments and services should be based on actual local need in each school board.

#### **Why?**

- ✓ Ontario averages out costs in the education sector, which leaves many boards underfunded and forced to make cuts to vital school services, like special education or custodial and maintenance work.
- ✓ Tens of thousands of students are on waiting lists for special needs assessments or services.
- ✓ Mandated programmes – like full day kindergarten – are not funded at the level required to deliver them in all boards.

✓ Many boards are forced to close schools or cut staff and services because there simply isn't enough funding for them to provide what students need.

✓ When boards close schools to deal with funding shortfalls, kids suffer. In rural and northern areas in particular, this means spending more time on buses and less time learning and being a kid.



## Share your own personal story as an education worker:

Give an example of how you are less able or unable to meet student needs due to a lack of resources or hours.

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## What to ask the MPP

(write down their response for each question)

### Will you:

1. Support a full, comprehensive, public review of the funding formula and the ways it falls short? Such a review would include broad, public, community consultations.

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2. Fight school closures in your constituency, and instead work to make schools community hubs?

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3. How will you work with us to take a serious look at the funding of the education system?

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## Effective MPP lobbying includes:

1. A short explanation of what the issue is and why you are meeting with them. In this case, why it is important to increase education funding so that boards can fund “whole schools.”
2. Strong, short key messages about the issue.
3. Using the key messages, provide the MPP with information specific to the local community and constituency he/she represents. Doing this makes it easier for the MPP to understand why the issue is important.
4. Being very clear about what you are asking the MPP to do.
5. Follow up within a few days of your meeting with a letter to the MPP giving a summary of the key issues you raised. A template letter you can use for this purpose is provided in this lobby kit.
6. If the MPP has asked you a question that you are not able to answer, don't feel obliged to say something. Please contact OSBCC Chair Terri Preston or OSBCC staff coordinator Jim Morrison and we will help you respond to the MPP.

## Lobby tips for meetings with MPPs:

Be specific and clear.

The key messages are the most important things we want the MPP to know, said in the simplest way possible.

Practice saying the key messages provided in this lobby kit.

Don't feel that you need to rush through in order to make all the points listed in the key message section.

Be comfortable in presenting the material and go at your own pace.

Give your lobby meeting a local feel by talking about and referencing what's going on in your community. Talk about your own experience on the job and how it has changed.

Refer to the constituents the MPP represents.

Be mindful however, not to give specific details or divulge personal information about any students or other employees where you work.

Avoid being too broad or general – refer to the specific “ask”.

An effective lobby also provides solutions.

The solutions we are proposing are:

- a full, public, broad review of the funding formula and the ways it falls short for so many school boards
- funding to sustain all the educational and community activities that take place in our schools
- increased staffing levels
- a halt to school closures, especially in rural and northern areas.

Remember to be courteous and respectful, regardless of the MPPs reaction to our point of view.