
November 2019- No 3

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CBE Budget Cuts – Still Many Questions Around Impacts

At a Principals meeting yesterday, which SA attended, the CBE shared the broad strategy they will apply to eliminate the \$32M shortfall for the current fiscal year due to unexpected funding cuts from the Provincial Government. Because of the timing (which will be about 4 months into the year) and the expenditures to date, the cuts required over the remaining 8 months will be closer to \$48M.

While the intention is to have the least possible impact on students, to put “staff over non-essential goods” and to freeze all non-essential spending, the magnitude will certainly impact staffing levels. The total reduction to school budgets is \$22M and to service units / central services, \$3M. Decisions on the latter (which is on top of the already \$3M reduction in the initial budget) are likely to be made by the end of next week. It is hoped that this area may be able to realize the reductions with minimal staffing impacts.

Schools were issued their revised/reduced RAM’s (budgets) last night. The reductions will not be the same for all but rather will be tiered percentages for different categories based on type of school and student enrollments. Principals will review and look at initial possibilities for their schools today and (we suspect!) over the weekend. Meetings with Area Directors to review and discuss proposed staffing decisions happen next Monday and Tuesday. Reconciliation meetings with Finance and HR are planned for Wednesday and Thursday, with Friday next week as the target date for them to be finalized. With respect to potential staffing changes, the plan is for any direct impacts on staff to not be effective until January, although those affected should be notified by the end of this month.

Of course, none of this yet answers the big question causing stress for many, if not all – where, in what form and to whom will the cuts apply in individual schools and work units. That should become much clearer over the next week or two.

It is important to remember that the many provisions in our collective agreements around layoff and recall and hours changes still apply. ***If you are one of those impacted and have any questions, or if you are not sure your Principal/Supervisor is making decisions in accordance with our agreements, please call the office to check.*** It is invariably better to flag and address potential mistakes beforehand, rather than to have to undo them after-the-fact.

These are very stressful times so above all, take care of yourself and of each other!

Working Together...

Shortly after the release of the provincial budget and before the full impact of it on CBE was known, we met with the other unions representing CBE employees (ATA, CUPE, Trades) to share information and look at coordinating messaging amongst ourselves and potentially with CBE once they went public with the numbers. As further information and ‘finer points’ about the Kenney budget, together with a couple of omnibus bills immediately thereafter became known, it has become pretty clear that much more than public education and funding of it are being threatened.

Post-secondary students and institutions, all public sector workers, supports for the most vulnerable, unions regardless of sector, collective bargaining and more seem to be under attack, the likes of which we haven’t seen in 25 years.

Over the past few weeks we have been meeting with numerous other unions and coalitions looking at potential ways to oppose the Kenney agenda, the focus being on working together and supporting each

other (like at a recent frigid CUPE rally at City Hall!). Yesterday we, together with ATA and CUPE reps, met with ND Education Critic, Sarah Hoffman, to discuss the impacts the budget cuts will have locally on students and staff. Earlier this week, we attended an ATA meeting and may look at replicating a letter writing campaign discussed there.

Ultimately, the success of any protest initiatives lies not with a handful of union or community leaders but with mobilizing large numbers of supporters. For now, if you are willing and interested, we urge you to register on the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) site <https://www.kenneyscuts.ca/> to receive notification of rallies, events etc. Their website (<https://www.afl.org/>) includes much additional information which will be of interest to many.

Also, please check out the Support Our Students Alberta website at <https://www.supportourstudents.ca/> (be sure to do the "Choice in Education Survey" under issues) or on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SOSAlberta/>

The UPC is having their AGM on Saturday, November 30th, at the Westin Calgary Airport at 11:00am. A rally in support of public education is planned (more information and reminder to follow).

Upcoming Meeting

Please mark your calendar and join Staff Association at our upcoming meeting:

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, November 27, 2019

The Glenmore Inn & Convention Centre

2720 Glenmore Trail SE

7:00pm (Glenmore West/Heritage Room)

We hope to see you there!!



Staff Development Funding

As per the information emailed to CBE employees on November 8th (Update / CBE Budget Shortfall) from Chief Superintendent, Christopher Usih, declaring that CBE has [frozen all non-essential spending](#), please note that "Staff Association (SA) staff development funds can continue to be used unless CBE is required to cover additional costs (including costs for substitute coverage)." Continuous employees, with Principal/Supervisor approval, can continue to take courses/conferences during work hours and have sub costs covered as long as this fits within an employees \$1,000 allotment.

SA Office Staff

- Given the absence of our seconded Chair (medical leave, nature and duration unknown), Albert's vacation/retirement and not yet having a new Manager in place, we have engaged former Chair, Lois Robb, to help cover the workload, on a part time basis until Christmas. We are very pleased and fortunate that Lois is willing and able to do so!
- We do anticipate being able to announce the hiring of another Manger soon.

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<i>If you wish to visit the SA office, please e-mail or phone ahead to book an appointment to ensure that someone is available to assist you.</i>	