

# COPACS

The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

Thursday, October 31st

To the Parents and Caregivers of SD 63

Unfortunately there does not appear to be a quick and easy solution that would see our children back in school and the Union and District back at the negotiating table. To the best of our knowledge there have been no talks since mediation broke down last week.

However, we are still convinced and hopeful that the District and CUPE 441 can reach a fair and reasonable negotiated contract. From COPACS's perspective the stumbling block seems to be whether or not the parties can address the issue of wage parity within the confines of the Provincial Framework Agreement and the resources available in that provincial framework.

COPACS has reached out and is having conversations with our elected MLA's and the Minister of Education. Our hope is that maybe there is still time before positions become too entrenched and polarised that we can do something nonpartisan and creative behind the scenes out of the limelight that would allow the parties to return to the table and get our kids back in the classroom.

In the meantime, our advice is to prepare for the worst case scenario. Assume that there will be no school this week. As well, it may be prudent to begin thinking about next week. We of course all hope that it will not come to that, and anyone with experience in these situations will tell you that a breakthrough can come quickly and unexpectedly.

COPACS understands that people are feeling angry, frustrated, stressed as the disruption, financial and emotional burdens grow with the passing of each day. We have and will continue to share your perspectives and stories with the wider public, the District, our education partner groups and our MLA's.

We are also in the process of developing key contacts and talking points for a letter campaign to help parents that want to get involved. As well, we would like to try and host a nonpartisan Q&A on our webpage and social media where parents can hear answers from both sides to questions they may have.

Please be patient as like you, there are only 5 of us on the executive trying to balance volunteering with jobs, families and the stress that this disruption brings.

As always yours for the children...

your COPACS Executive