

COPACS

The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

October 24, 2019

Dear PAC Presidents,

As you are well aware, the talks between the District and CUPE 441– the local union representing support staff in our district – have broken down. As of yesterday, CUPE 411 has served strike notice to the District. The union has indicated that it intends to begin full strike action beginning Monday, October 28th @ 5:45am.

The District is asking parents not to send their children to school on Monday, as the only staff in the buildings will likely be school administrators. The Saanich Teachers' Association has indicated that its members will not be crossing picket lines in a show of solidarity with support staff.

This of course puts a lot of pressure on parents to make alternative arrangements in the next few days. Particularly those with younger children and special needs. Any help and leadership you and your executive can give to your parents will be very important in navigating this disruption.

Please:

- Tell parents to monitor the District Web page for news, updates and possible child-care resources: <https://www.sd63.bc.ca/>
- Brainstorm with your executive on potential options, strategies and resources available to parents in your community and the best ways to get this information out to parents
- Look to identify those parents/guardians who are unable to make other arrangements. Be sure to connect and work with your school administrators as these parents may approach them first.
- Share with COPACS any ideas or options that we can pass on to other PACS
- Reach out to COPACS with any questions or concerns that you have.

Potential resources/ideas/alternatives:

- The local recreation centres (Commonwealth and Panorama) are offering school closure camps. Spots are limited and will be on a first-come first-served basis.
- COPACS has reached out to some of the faith communities on the peninsula to see if they can offer child-care options.
- Rotating playgroups. Several parents get together and alternate hosting playdates.
- Teen babysitters. Older children with training and experience in babysitting may be able to provide childcare for families with young children unable to find alternatives.

Sincerely,
Your COPACS Executive