

March 4, 2025

Dear CUPE Staff,

Buffalo Trail Public Schools remains committed to reaching a resolution through negotiations and is pleased to be returning to mediation on March 14. We recognize that bargaining is the only path to an agreement, and we appreciate your patience and support as this process continues.

We want to provide you with an update on recent developments in labour negotiations. While we have not yet received official notification from the Labour Relations Board, CUPE Local 1606 posted on their Facebook page last night stating that the results of their strike vote have given them a mandate to take strike action if they choose.

Similarly, yesterday, Buffalo Trail Public Schools (BTPS) Board of Trustees filed for and was approved for a lockout poll, as permitted under the Alberta Labour Relations Code. This step allows BTPS to consider potential responses if labour action impacts our ability to maintain a safe and stable learning environment for students.

[ALRB Information Bulletin 17](#) outlines the rights and responsibilities of both the union and the employer, ensuring that each party follows equitable and structured steps in the labour action process. Applying for a lockout poll is a standard part of the labour action process, equivalent to a union conducting a strike vote. It provides the employer with an option should the need arise, but it does not mean a lockout will necessarily occur. Just as the union has a 120-day period to initiate strike action, the Board of Trustees now has a 120-day window to utilize this option if necessary. Any decision regarding a lockout will be made with the best interests of our students and BTPS as a whole in mind.

As indicated in our FAQs on our Labour Relations webpage, a lockout is a work stoppage initiated by the employer that typically involves restricting employees' access to the workplace and suspending work. If BTPS were to issue a lockout notice, any employee who chooses to return to work would not be impacted.

We understand that labour negotiations bring uncertainty, and we remain focused on supporting our staff, students, and families through this process. Our priority is to maintain a safe and positive learning environment while working toward a resolution that respects all parties.

Throughout this process, we are committed to being transparent and ensuring our staff and families are well-informed. Updates are continuously posted on our [Labour Relations](#) webpage, and any further inquiries can be directed to [labourrelations@btps.ca](mailto:labourrelations@btps.ca).

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb  
Superintendent