

Communiqué from OSBCU President

### **Report on meeting with the Minister of Education**

On February 8, I joined CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn and CUPE staff members Darcie McEathron, Michel Revelin, Dan Crow and Chris Watson for a 30-minute meeting with Ontario Education Minister Lisa Thompson MPP.

It was an opportunity to meet with the current government and to share with Minister Thompson the concerns of the folks that we represent and the work that we perform in our schools. It was clear during the meeting that there is some disconnect between the minister and who we are; she frequently referred to us as teachers and janitors, though we corrected her on each occasion and provided the correct and inclusive language. We will continue to push this concept in future conversations with her staff.

The minister often referred to what she deems the fiscal realities of the education sector and assured us that she was open to hearing our suggestions. CUPE researcher Dan Crow has been working on budget submissions and we will prepare additional materials to highlight that not only does this government need to invest in education, but they need to commit to quality public education – and that we will not stand for privatization in any form.

Following the meeting, our team is further resolved that we have work to do to mobilize our membership and our communities. In the upcoming weeks we will be looking for local leaders to meet with their MPPs, engage with their communities, speak with allies and more. We have a great deal of work ahead, but I am confident that we are up to the challenge. I encourage you to continue promoting that we are the #powerofpubliceducation

In solidarity,

Laura Walton  
OSBCU President