

# CUPE Ontario Convention report back - GMM (July 2023)

## CUPE Ontario Convention 2023 delegates:

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## **Reflections:**

1. The Local was recognized with an award as a striking local, and had the opportunity to take the stage and speak to the Convention floor about important take aways from our strike action.
2. The Local was instrumental in getting the convention's floor support for getting important strike fund regulations amended at the National convention in the fall.
  - a. For e.g. resolutions 58 and 59, pertaining with implementing electronic National Strike Fund Forms and supporting locals in paying strike pay through e-transfer and direct deposit in addition to cheques.
  - b. See resolutions here:  
<https://cupe.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Resolutions-Committee-2023-FINAL-VERSION-May-24-2023-ENGLISH.pdf>
  - c. Resolutions "passed" at Convention are tasked to CUPE Ontario (CUPE Ontario is a political body) to endorse at the National level, from which binding decisions and the National Constitution flows.
3. Strong work mapping the room and organizing around resolutions on the floor.
4. Appreciation for the trust among our Local for delegates to determine their vote based on debate on the floor and amongst workers: we do not block or whip votes.
5. Appreciation that we showed up with rank-and-file members, not just Executive Committee members. A pervasive issue at Convention is that a lot of locals don't send that many rank-and-file members. We should keep up this practice so long as it's financially sustainable.
6. Few contentious resolutions hit the floor this year: most things hitting the floor were agreeable. We need to have more debate on the floor: that is how people's minds are changed, and it is a downside of having less contentious resolutions on the floor.

7. Emerging from the Pink Triangle caucus (for LGBTQ2+ members): there seems to be confusion about what does this caucus actually does. What do its elected positions serve?
8. There is a learning curve to familiarizing yourself with navigation Convention processes, and a lot of the experience rests upon interpersonal connections.
9. It was important to share our overall experience in terms of the strike — there are many unions that are finishing bargaining and looking at fall strikes.
10. Some members could not have participated without the amazing on-site child care and this should continue to be a priority.

### **Going forward:**

1. **Connecting with other CUPE locals in the City:** we need to have stronger relationships with other CUPE locals in Hamilton for next year — what are their issues? Bargaining priorities? How can we support each other?
  - a. We need to get the area CUPE Council going again: starting with locals in the area that sent us strike support or stopped by our picket lines. National reps in the Hamilton office are keen to get it going again, and we can use spaces off-campus like HDLC's Solidarity Place.
  - b. Looking towards future Conventions, it is key that we take opportunities organize outside of our sector as certain shared issues become relevant.
  - c.
2. **Cops Out of CUPE:** We continue to intervene on the issue of Cops Out of CUPE — coming out of the convention there is more resolve that we need to be doing more in between conventions to organize on those issues. More is possible and the organizing work is slowly emerging out of relationships and conversations at Convention.
3. **CUPE National:** Ahead of the National convention, we need talk to locals and see who is sending delegates; work with other larger Locals to support Locals lacking financial resources in sending delegates; and look into sending a coordinated block to National, perhaps booking out a VIA rail car.
  - a. Our Local is one of the larger locals in the Sector and can support other locals with its solid budget and resources.
4. **Relationship building outside the sector:** we need to work on building relationships with non-academic locals, especially over shared issues i.e. contracting out.
5. **Recommendations for changing the Convention format:** the ways speeches were organized restricted the amount of time we had to discuss resolutions on the floor. We need more time for debate, which is how we change minds.
  - a. These changes are possible: for e.g. the CUPE Ontario Convention did not use to be an Action Plan and members organized to implement that.
  - b. Continue to prioritize making **child care accessible**.
6. **Pink Triangle caucus:** We should look towards organizing with other locals to demand better action from bodies like Pink Triangle.

7. **Resolutions committee:** We should try to get someone from our Local on the resolutions committee next year, so that we can have an “in” to hear what resolutions are hitting the floor and
8. **Orienting delegates:** we should take our experiences at Convention and shared orientation material amongst other Locals to produce our own orientation resources and create more institutional knowledge available for people attending in the future.
  - a. More procedural resources are needed: for e.g. what does it mean for a resolution to be referred, when should we refer them, and what can we expect in that process?