



January 20, 2020

Greetings Members,

Today, the Toronto Elementary Teachers are conducting a one-day strike at TDSB elementary schools. The School Board has cancelled elementary programs however it has directed that Toronto Education Workers/Local 4400 members are required to attend work as usual. In the event that the School Board re-assigns Toronto Education Workers/Local 4400 members to secondary school special education classes, the Board is required to comply with the order of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

The Labour Board has ordered the School Board to ensure that you are “properly and fully informed... about the special needs and any safety concerns regarding the students” you will be supervising. This includes being fully briefed on any safety plans relevant to your assignment. The Labour Board has also ordered the School Board to provide you with any documentation relating to any accommodations you may have in place before re-assigning you to a different location or position. If you are aware of any violation of these orders, you should immediately contact your Steward Co-Ordinator.

During these strikes, you are required to comply with any reasonable direction from your supervisor, even if it violates the Collective Agreement. You are ***not*** required to perform work which you believe to be unsafe, and you are *not* required to perform work that you are not physically capable of performing.

No one is required to perform work that is unsafe. If you believe that an assignment places you or another employee in danger, you are entitled to refuse to work under s. 43(3) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and the School Board cannot discipline you or take any other reprisals against you.

If you believe that an assignment places you in danger, including danger from workplace violence, you should tell your supervisor that you are refusing for this reason. The supervisor must then comply with the Act, and take all necessary steps for your safety and the safety of others. You should also contact your union representative so that you will be represented in any investigation under the Act.

Toronto Education Workers/Local 4400 will be grieving all improper re-assignments, but until the grievance is determined, you will be required to comply with directions to perform any duties that are not unsafe.

If you have any questions about what is happening during these labour disputes, you should contact your Steward Co-Ordinator.

Sincerely,

John Weatherup
President