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February 20, 2025

To our FSD Community,

**Re: CUPE Local 5040 Strike Notice Issued to Foothills School Division**

This letter is to inform you that our colleagues in Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 5040 have served Foothills School Division (FSD) with 72 hours' strike notice, taking effect Monday, February 24, 2025, and with initial picketing to take place near École Secondaire Highwood High School, École Secondaire Foothills Composite High School | Alberta High School of Fine Arts, and Oilfields School starting at 6:00 AM.

This notice was served at 4:00 PM on February 20, 2025, ahead of the scheduled bargaining meeting planned for February 21, 2025. Foothills School Division is committed to proceeding with the meeting to reach a collective agreement that aligns with both Division and provincial constraints while also acknowledging the value of our team members.

This next step initiated by CUPE Local 5040 follows the union's supervised strike vote that took place on February 10 and 11, 2025. The vote resulted in a 82% of union members in favour of labour action, mirroring the actions of several other school-based CUPE Locals in the province.

CUPE Local 5040 represents FSD school-based support staff, who provide important functions within our schools, contributing to the engagement, support, and success of students. The following active roles at the division will be participating in the job action:

- Career and Technology Instructors (non-teachers)
- Data Facilitators
- Educational Assistants
- Learning Commons Facilitators
- Office Administrators
- Secretaries
- Youth Development Coaches

In this job action, CUPE Local 5040 employees who serve in the above roles have declared a strike (cessation of work). The absence of these individuals within our schools will undoubtedly have an impact on school operations and student learning.

***How we are adapting***

Foothills School Division is currently enacting its contingency plan to best assure student and staff safety, well-being, and continuity of student learning. Schools will be open during any job action. Classes from Junior Kindergarten through to Grade 12 are in operation. Schools will continue to be safe, welcoming, caring, and

respectful learning environments. However, adaptations to operations will be in place, and school-specific changes will be communicated directly by your child's school. We have implemented the following system-wide operations:

- **Bus service:** FSD Transportation Services and bus routes will run as per usual. Please check the Bus Route Status page at our website for route delays or cancellations.
- **Students needing additional supports:** We have assessed the needs and have created plans to best support students and provide continuity of learning. Accordingly, individual students requiring additional support may learn from home during the strike. Impacted families will be contacted directly by school leaders to review plans, opportunities for in-person learning, and access to resources for temporary at-home learning. Our primary responsibility is student safety and well-being.
- **Student Attendance:** Teachers will continue to record attendance at the start of the day, and for each class (middle and high schools). This is to keep families informed of their child's attendance.
  - Each school has an attendance reporting email and phone extension. Please use one of these methods to report your child's absence.
  - For pre-planned late arrivals or early pick-ups for medical appointments etc., please email to inform your child's teacher/home room teacher in advance.
  - To promote the safety of students, we will be notifying student contacts by phone call and email if a student is marked absent at first attendance. This notification will go out regardless if they have an excused absence.
    - A notification of a student's absence record will also be issued at the end of day for junior and senior high school students.
- **Drop-off & Pick-up:** While picket lines are not to be on school/division property, please allow extra time due to potential delays caused by picketing near schools. Designated drop-off areas will be supervised to assure student safety.
- **Picketing Locations:** Specific picketing locations cannot be predicted; we assure you that all necessary safety measures are in place to protect students and staff.
  - Picketing can occur off school property and on adjacent public grounds or sidewalks.
  - Picketing is intended to slow down, but is not to inhibit, an individual's access to a school or Division site. Students and families may cross the picket line.
  - All non-striking employees are permitted to enter the school property. Employees who are not under a union strike mandate are to report to work as normal.
- **Reporting unsafe behaviour:** If you notice unsafe conditions for individuals accessing the school, please contact the local RCMP at 403-995-6400 (Okotoks), 403-652-2356 (High River), 403-933-6600 (Diamond Valley/Foothills County).
- **Joint Use:** Joint-use facilities such as evening gym activities, will continue as scheduled, FSD will be monitoring use and reserves the right to suspend activities, if required.

***Safety is a shared responsibility***

We recognize that changes to routines and school operations may impact your family. Foothills School Division is currently enacting its contingency plan to best assure student and staff safety and well-being. We appreciate your understanding while we adapt to working without some of our team members. We also appreciate your participation to maintain safety and well-being of all students and staff members. Each school will be adapting to this labour disruption to best serve site-specific operations; should you receive notification of changes, we appreciate your cooperation to observe and follow the revised protocols. The procedure to report concerns has not changed and is reflected in FSD [Administrative Procedure 151](#).

Foothills School Division holds the safety and well-being of all students and staff as a priority. We commit to open and respectful communication with you, our partners in education. As this situation develops, further adaptations to operations and learning opportunities may be required. The Division, or your child's school, will communicate those changes with you as effectively as possible.

***Staying informed***

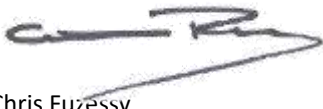
In our commitment to transparent communication with you, our partners in education, we have set up a page at our website dedicated to information regarding [labour relations with CUPE Local 5040](#). You can find a timeline of bargaining, resources about the bargaining process, past public communications from the Division, and a FAQ for your reference. This page will be updated as often as information becomes available. We encourage you to explore this page to better understand the labour action ([link](#)).

***Our next steps***

All employees are important to the education system, and it is through our collaboration that we explore, develop, and celebrate student learning. We are committed to meeting with the CUPE Local 5040 negotiating team to continue bargaining and to come to an equitable resolution within provincial parameters.

We are appreciative of your patience, cooperation, and understanding while we continue to navigate this challenge and prioritize student and staff learning, and safety.

Yours in learning,



Chris Fuzessy  
Superintendent of Schools  
Foothills School Division