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School announces closure less than a day after teachers vote to join union

Mississauga, ON – January 31, 2018 – Fifteen teachers at the North American Muslim Foundation School in Scarborough became Union Members with Local 175 of the United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW) on the afternoon of January 29, 2018. Less than a day later, the school sent letters to parents and staff, and reached out to reporters, to claim it had to close as a result of “extreme financial stress.”

“Instead of dealing with the concerns of their employees, they decided it was better to close the school, force their students and families to find alternate schooling with no notice, and throw these 15 teachers out of work,” said Shawn Haggerty, President of UFCW Local 175. “All because these hardworking educators exercised their right to join a Union. We are outraged.”

Parents and staff received letters dated January 30 informing them the school would cease operations effective immediately. That left parents with no time to make arrangements for their children’s care. The Union did not receive any formal notice from the school.

Since the Members only just voted yes to joining, there had been no bargaining proposals taken or dates set to even meet with the employer. “How can they claim they must close when they don’t even know what’s on the table yet,” asked President Haggerty?

Teachers at the school sought representation with UFCW Local 175 because of a lack of respect and job security in the workplace. The staff cited mistreatment by management as well as little consideration for the well-being of the children.

The Union will pursue all legal avenues available at this time.

Over the last year, teachers at several Muslim and International schools voted to join the growing ranks of education professionals represented by UFCW Locals 175 & 633.

UFCW Locals 175 & 633 represents more than 70,000 workers across Ontario in a variety of industries.

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