

GIVE US THE MEANS

December 2015

N°10

AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE CONCLUDED AT THE FPPE-CSQ SECTORAL TABLE

The **Federation of Professionals in Education of Quebec (FPPE-CSQ)**, which represents 19 affiliated unions and over 7200 professionals in most of the Francophone and Anglophone school boards of Quebec, concluded an agreement in principle at the sectoral table over the weekend. This agreement was approved on December 14 by the Federal Council of the FPPE and will be presented to members at a general meeting of each of the unions upon return from the holiday break.

It should be understood that the inter-sectoral negotiations of the CSQ and the Common Front (wages, retirement, etc.) have yet to be completed and it is only when there will be a settlement at that table that the final agreement will be submitted to you for your approval. However, we felt it was important to provide you with the details of the work accomplished at the sectoral table and the gains obtained.

A reminder of the context and the employer initial demands

In December of 2014, you received a Passerelle Nego N° 2 ([FR](#) & [AN](#)), outlining the details of the demands submitted by the employer's representatives (CPNCF and CPNCA), entitled «Threat of Unprecedented Cutbacks in Working Conditions." Under the auspice of AUSTERITY and governmental control over public finances, we were presented with a series of demands designed to cut costs, increase managerial flexibility and authority over professionals as well as measures that could have led to greater precarity in our jobs.

- ➔ Extension of the hiring period for supernumerary professionals due to an increase in workload to 12 months (currently limited to six months)
- ➔ Removal of the obligation to create regular posts for supernumerary projects renewed for a fourth year.
- ➔ Permission for the employer to revise work hours (reduce regular contracts up to five hours) without going through the staff reduction protocol.
- ➔ Limit the number of paid legal holidays to 13 days for all professionals (the average is currently 17).
- ➔ Limit the right to health, medication and salary insurance for supernumerary and replacement professionals.
- ➔ Increase the of 50 km radius provided for in the context of job security.

- ➔ Calculate the right to advancement in step as a pro rata of time worked (ex: a 20% position would take 5 years to gain the equivalent of one year of experience).
- ➔ Have the power to terminate the employment of a replacement or supernumerary professional before the end of their pre-stated contract and for any reason.
- ➔ Decrease compensation during the first year of salary insurance from 85% to 75%;
- ➔ Introduce a new model for the organization of work schedules to intensify services during periods limited to the presence of students (annualization of certain professional job categories).
- ➔ Withdraw the funding obtained for the creation of new professional positions obtained during the last round of negotiations (Annex D- Professional Resources to support the success of young and adult students).
- ➔ Weaken union representation by increasing the employers' control and reducing their portion of the funding for union liberations

All this, combined with the government's desire to settle the negotiations at "zero cost"...

A tentative agreement that protects our acquired and future rights

After more than a year at the table and several dozen meetings with management, the FPPE concluded their agreement in principle on Saturday, December 12 in the early hours of the morning. We are proud to announce that this agreement protects our acquired rights and more specifically, our employment system which was being threatened; an agreement in which **none of the setbacks mentioned earlier can be found**.

Despite the difficult context of this round of negotiations and given the government's appetite for cutbacks, we were able to **obtain the following gains**:

- ⇒ **A guarantee of the continuation of a specific envelope** for professional resources in support of student success in the Youth and Adult sectors (currently estimated at 29.2 million per year).
- ⇒ **A promise from the Ministry (MEESR) for a new injection of 7 million dollars** in a specific measure dedicated to additional professional resources
- ⇒ **Professional Development**: the addition of 4,965\$ for professionals in outlying regions to cover the costs of professional development activities
- ⇒ **Premium for Psychologists**: A letter of intent to be included in the collective agreement allocating a premium of 9.6% to psychologists working 70 hours /two week period and 6.7% for psychologists working at least 52,5hours/ 2 week period. This represents a commitment of over 5 million dollars and corrects an inequity between the Health and Education sectors that we have been fighting for since 2012.
- ⇒ **Continuation of benefits when changing employer within the education network**: the right to an automatic leave of absence, transfer of vacation credits and accelerated access job security (tenure) with the new employer.
- ⇒ **Vacation**: Recognition of all periods worked as a supernumerary or replacement professional in the calculation of vacation credits when a regular position is obtained (will allow earlier access to a fifth week of vacation)
- ⇒ **Professional tasks**: Improvement to clauses recognizing the complexity of the professional functions including professional development, professional autonomy, consultation and obligations related to required membership in a professional order.
- ⇒ **Primary place of work**: reinforcement of the notion of "primary place of work" in several clauses of the collective agreement.
- ⇒ **Gradual return to work after a period of invalidity**: the addition of clause which will allow the possibility to decrease the 12 week period required to admissible for a gradual return to work or to increase the 12 week period for the duration of a gradual return .
- ⇒ **Budgetary Rules**: access to documents related to budgetary rules and parameters which will allow the union to participate in the consultative process and follow up on allocations for professional resources.
- ⇒ **Special Leaves**: an increase from 3 to 7 days in the event of a marriage or civil union and from 5 to 7 days in the event of the death of a spouse, child, or the spouse's child; 2 days for personal leave (to be deducted from the bank of sick days).
- ⇒ **Union representation**: clarification of the delays required for requesting leaves for union activities.

Some concessions to management demands were made to what seemed to be reasonable requests:

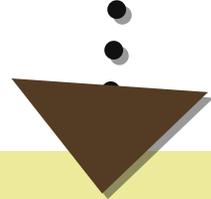
- **Extending the probationary period** for regular full-time or part-time professionals to 12 months.
- **Special Leave**: Clarifying family ties in the event of a death by limiting them to family ties directly related to the current marital or civil union status (i.e. in-laws, step-parents etc.,) and in the event of a death, to allow the shift of one of the days for use at a later date (in the case of a memorial, funeral or other ritual related to the event)
- Remove the obligation to **pay union dues** when temporarily assigned to a management position.
- Addition of a clause which would prevent the **double accumulation of vacation benefits** when transferring from another employment category to a professional position during the school year (i.e. teacher to Ped. Consultant as January 01)
- Ensure, in the case of **occupational injuries**, that the salary paid is not higher than that which would have been received if the person was at work.
- Some **technical aspects and concordances** (allow transmission of certain information to professionals and the union via e-mail, reduce the printing of hard copy paper collective agreements and updating certain annexes).
- **Specific to English School Boards**: the introduction of two clauses that recognize managerial rights and a shared responsibility for issues related to confidentiality.

Conclusion

The historic mobilization of our members and the overwhelming support of the population in defense of the public education system, have allowed us to resist the employers' intention to cutback in our working conditions. The efforts of the FPPE-CSQ also contributed to the reinvestment by the government of \$ 80 million in education; including the addition of professional resources that will partially compensate for the loss of over 250 professional positions last year.

Even if we may have aspired to greater gains, it is important to emphasize that we have managed to preserve , during this negotiation, an intact employment system that will help us maintain quality jobs within the context of upcoming changes in the governance of school boards outlined in the draft proposal to amend the Education Act. That in itself, is an accomplishment we hope you will appreciate.

The FPPE Negotiating Team



News from the Cree and Kativik Tables

The FPPE is still at the negotiation table for Cree School board professionals. Several meetings were held in the past months and discussions will continue after the holidays. The FPPE hopes to reach a tentative agreement within a few weeks.

In regards to the negotiations for Kativik School board professionals, the situation is quite different. Indeed, one year after the filing of the Union demands, and at a time when the majority of sectoral negotiations are ending, we are still waiting for the employer to file its' demands. Faced with this situation, the FPPE has no other choices than, in conjunction with the AENQ and the CSQ, to undertake appropriate legal measures to resolve the impasse.

Outstanding issues

The fact that we endorsed a tentative agreement on Monday-December 14th (an agreement concluded on the night of Friday to Saturday) does not mean that everything is final! In fact, as you may have read in La Passerelle Nego No. 8, several major issues have been transferred to the Central table. Indeed, the salary structure, the settlement of complaints under the maintenance of equity 2010 and the classification (rangement) of mixed jobs are not yet resolved. We had previously informed you of the importance of these issues for professionals in this round of negotiations, especially in light of the strong intention of the Government to resolve all job relativities within the new proposed salary structure. As a result, we will continue to work very hard to ensure that these issues, with regards to our specific professions, are settled to our satisfaction.

**Johanne Pomerleau,
President FPPE (CSQ)**

MOBILIZATION MOBILIZATION MOBILIZATION

Your commitment throughout the negotiations remained exemplary both in the collective actions taken within the education network and in local initiatives regarding our day to day realities within our school boards.. Similarly, your presence at gatherings during the strike days with members of the Common Front were noticed and appreciated. This commitment is even more significant in that it was supported by a real mobilization of Quebec society at large. Think of the actions of the "Parents against Austerity" movement, which created human chains around schools in Quebec. Think also of the support of people who "honked" their support passing in front of the picket lines. The population understood and supported our concerns.

We cannot ignore that professionals in education were cited as never before in multiple reports and articles published in the media. The media tour last spring of our president, Mrs Johanne Pomerleau,

started a movement that has remained present in the Quebec public realm. Several journalists have taken a clear stance calling for the government to a reinvest in education ... and, we were included in many of their editorials..

We can be proud of our mobilization in these negotiations and of the positive involvement of Quebec society in defending the public school system. Through this, we have an agreement in principle at the sectoral table, while the negotiations at the inter-sectorial table are still active. The employer's side remains firm in its positions. As a result, we invite you to remain united until the very end. Let's continue to be actively present on social networks and remember that a real reinvestment in education also includes wages and a retirement equal to the level of commitment we demonstrate in our professions on a daily basis.

**Standing together to meet the challenges of today
and tomorrow!**

*Wishing you a Happy Holidays
From The Negotiating Team*

