

Press release

## **Renewal of collective agreements Not a glimmer of hope for teachers**

Quebec City, December 15, 2022. – Having reviewed the sectorial demands submitted by the employer’s negotiating committees, the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT-APEQ) and the *Fédération des syndicats de l’enseignement* (FSE-CSQ) are perplexed by management’s objectives, its unresponsiveness and its lack of consideration.

The day before, QPAT-APEQ and the FSE-CSQ, along with their colleagues from the CSQ school network, formed a human chain in front of Premier François Legault’s office. Waving flashlights, they sent the message that teaching staff urgently need a glimmer of hope.

### **Class composition**

Over the last few weeks the Minister of Education has acknowledged that virtually all the teachers he met during his tour of the schools told him that class composition has become extremely challenging. And yet the employer’s offers are disappointing in this respect.

“Let’s hope that this is not bad faith, but rather a sign that the government, the negotiating team and its minister have not yet found the time to sit down together and take the real measure of the needs that the teachers made known to him during his tour. It is utter nonsense to suppose that the inclusion of special needs students in so-called regular classes can be achieved while disregarding—as the management side’s blanket refusal would imply—class composition and the glaring lack of services. Teachers’ daily lives must be improved so that they can enjoy working conditions that will promote the success of their students. In a context of labour scarcity, one might have expected responsive measures to attract and retain staff, but nothing in what has been proposed meets that criterion. Now

is the time to send a strong signal to current teachers and those who would like to join them,” said FSE-CSQ president Josée Scalabrini.

“What happened to making education THE priority? Not only are the problems well known, but teachers aren’t short of ideas to solve them! I can’t believe that the government has missed its chance to set the tone for negotiations by offering the much needed glimmer of hope. Attacking teachers’ autonomy is no way to make them feel valued,” added QPAT president Heidi Yetman.

### **Demands that cause concern**

In spite of the progress made on the legislative front with respect to the recognition of pedagogical expertise, it is disheartening that management’s offers constitute an attack on professional autonomy in that they seek to impose certain digital pedagogical approaches. Moreover, their inordinate appetite for control over many facets of teachers’ workload shows disregard for the latter’s professional expertise.

While management wants to expand distance learning across the board, they are still adamant that teachers may not perform their non-student-facing duties from home. Why create such a gap between teachers and other professionals in an environment that is so competitive in terms of attractiveness?

Another particularly disturbing aspect of what we were presented with today is the desire to create more instability, anxiety and insecurity for students, parents and teachers alike by changing teachers’ workload mid-year.

For the vocational training (VT) and adult education (AE) sectors, we can only deplore the government’s desire to downgrade teachers’ working conditions by increasing the workday in VT and extending the regular work week in AE and VT.

### **Profile**

[The Fédération des syndicats de l’enseignement \(FSE-CSQ\)](#) brings together 34 unions representing more than 87,000 teachers in school service centres and school boards across Quebec. Its membership includes teachers from all sectors: preschool, elementary, secondary, vocational training and adult general education. It is affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec* (CSQ) and negotiates as a cartel with the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (APEQ-QPAT), which represents the 8,000 teachers in Quebec’s English school boards. Together they represent 95,000 teachers.

### **Sources**

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