



I N F O - N E G O

Association provinciale des enseignantes et enseignants du Québec

Intersectorial

The central negotiations table is where negotiators for the government from the Treasury Board and our negotiators from the Common Front meet to discuss matters related to salary, and pension. The Treasury Board's salary offer of 0% for the first two years and 1% for three years after that means our salaries would not even keep up with inflation.

With respect to pensions, for anyone who retires as of January 2017, the Treasury Board wants to push retirement for an unreduced pension from age 60 to age 62, increase the reduction for early retirement to 7.2% per year from 4%, and use the best eight years average salary instead of the best five years average salary to calculate pensions, all of which would lead to reduced pension benefits.

The negotiators have met a few times since the government's deposit on December 15th. We are early in the negotiating process and so there is little to report. There have been discussions mostly for clarification purposes but not much movement on the salary offer. With respect to the government's pension proposal, a request was made to CARRA to give us a clear idea what the full impact of the government's attack on our pension plan would be for future retirees.

Sectorial

At this negotiations table, the *ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* (MELS) and the Quebec English School Boards' Association (QESBA) are represented by one person each. These two organizations comprise the *Comité patronal de négociation pour les commissions scolaires anglophones* (CPNCA),

management's representatives. An equivalent structure exists in the francophone sector (CPNCF).

As we are in cartel with our francophone colleagues in the *Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement* (FSE), who in turn are affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec* (CSQ), QPAT has the advantage of being present at both negotiating tables. We have our own table with the CPNCA, and our negotiator is a member of the FSE negotiating team.

Since the management demands are identical for 95% of the topics under discussion, our cartel gives us a significant advantage throughout the process of negotiations. Between the two tables, there have been 12 negotiation sessions as of February 9, 2015.

We are halfway through a presentation of negotiation topics by both sides. We are clear in our demands. Our deposit is easy to understand as are the solutions we want in the agreement since it was formulated in collective agreement clauses. It is based on two stages of consultation with members where, in total, more than 40,000 teachers expressed themselves.

On the other hand, the management deposit has been presented only as principles, so their actual problems are presented with little elaboration, and the proposed solutions are vague and general. This makes it difficult to get a clear explanation from the management side about what exact modifications they wish to see in the agreement. What we have observed is that a large portion of their demands is a general order from the Treasury Board to create savings. This is the mantra of the present Liberal government. The other

general thrust of their demands is to increase management rights, either for the school board or for the administration of schools and centres.

The result is a problematic, not to say nearly impossible, situation so far, in which we cannot get from them the exact modifications which they are aiming to achieve. It's pretty clear that the management representatives have no mandate to move forward in the negotiation process. Responses are enigmatic or non-existent as they are waiting for Martin Coiteux, the Chair of the Treasury Board, to give his directives.

What's next?

Since the deposit of the sectorial and intersectorial proposals, it has become clear to everyone that these are not offers in the traditional sense of negotiations. They show little understanding of what teachers do in the classroom and what they are worth. The government's only wish is to save money but it has forgotten that education is an investment in the future of Quebec.

Despite the difficulty of the situation, we are carrying on with our work and hope to have more specific details to give you in our next information bulletin. Until then, it is important to remember that our negotiation is political and that, for that reason, your support is essential. All actions will, in one way or another, influence the course of negotiations. The better the support we give our negotiators, the better will be our chances of achieving positive results.

Mobilization/Actions

We know that many of you are angry with the government's proposals and want to get involved in actions that would make the government clearly aware of your resentment and frustration. So, when are we going to do more? First, it is important to remember that we are early on in the negotiations process and must give our negotiators the chance to start the discussions. After all, our actions are meant to support our negotiators and are linked to their progress or lack of it at the negotiating table. Second, it is very possible that we will have to engage in accelerated actions as winter ends and spring comes. This makes it important for all us to be ready to act quickly when it becomes necessary.



QPAT members at the *Refusons l'austerité* demonstration

So far we have asked you to sign the on-line petition to the National Assembly in support of our demands. If you have not yet signed it, we strongly encourage you to take this simple action.

Our next action is the "Keeping Track of my Workload", which is an important way for us to show all the extra work that we do on top of our already heavy workload. These early actions are meant to build solidarity amongst all public sector workers and to foster public support. For both of these actions, speak to your school's union delegate to find out more about how you can take part.

QPAT has participated in a number of demonstrations since the late fall:

- November 29, 2014 at the *Refusons l'austerité* demonstrations, where crowds



Richard Goldfinch, President of QPAT, addressing QPAT and FSE teachers as part of a flash mob in front of the MELS

of more than 100,000 people turned out on to the streets of Montreal and Quebec City to protest against the government's drive to cut back public services;

- December 12, 2014 at the Sheraton Hotel in Montreal where Treasury Board President Martin Coiteux was addressing the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal;
- January 28, 2015 as part of a flash mob in front of the MELS office in Montreal;
- February 3, 2015 at the Palais des Congrès where Premier Philippe Couillard was addressing The Montreal Chamber of Commerce.