

La Passerelle

International Women's Day

Editorial



Johanne Pomerleau,
President

STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST AUSTERITY!

On March 8, as we do every year, we will celebrate International Women's Day. This year's theme is "*Women on the March of Equality, Standing together Against Austerity.*" However, how will we manage to rejoice this year? How can we celebrate this day when the Couillard government, with all its cuts, is dismantling our services, piece by piece? We must remember that it is mostly women who provide these services and are therefore at risk of becoming the victims of these cutbacks. Everyone will be affected by austerity, but not all in the same way! Women, whose status is more often precarious, who are more often single parents, are at risk of being hit much harder by austerity measures.

At the FPPE, 75% of our members are women and, among those under the age of 35, the number is closer to 85%! We cannot remain insensitive to the discriminatory effects of these cutbacks that are succeeding one another, destroying our social net little by little.

In addition to the cutbacks that affect all of us, we are negotiating! We have all taken note of the employer offers, whether it be in terms of salary levels (0%, 0%, 1%, 1%, 1%) or unacceptable demands for a fiscal clawback on our retirement fund, the Government and Public Employees Retirement Plan. We have also seen the employer demands on a sectoral level: increased precariousness, right to manage, reduced benefits in terms of insurance and job security, without forgetting that it has not, in its submission, met any of our legitimate demands to improve working conditions for professionals.

When you look at this bleak scenario, not only do we have the right to take offence, we must take offence! We must not give up! In recent weeks, demonstrations have been taking place in rapid succession. Union, community, feminist and student organizations,

among others, working together, as one, to push back this government that is bulldozing its way to its objective, a balanced budget. It wants balance at all costs, and not with the goal of reinvesting in public services; no, its goal is to reduce the size of the government and lower taxes, in order to be re-elected!

We will not let that happen! For the men and women who work in public service, for the adults of tomorrow, for the families, for the least fortunate in our society, for decent working conditions, we will fight!

Mr. Couillard and his government will find us standing in their way!

*Happy March
8 to all
professionals!*



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[Sophie Massé](#),
Vice-president

Negotiations - Employer demands with a greater impact on professionals

Employer demands, at the sectoral bargaining table as well as the intersectoral bargaining table (salary, retirement), constitute a serious attack on working conditions for public and quasi-public sector personnel, particularly female employees. The majority of the FPPE members are women (85%) and this percentage is even higher where precarious employees are concerned.

In the context of renewing the collective agreement, the employer's side will even go as far as attempting to limit access to regular positions and diminishing the rights of people with a precarious status through some of these demands. Here are a few:

- ↪ *Extend the hiring period under supernumerary status for workload increases (currently 6 months);*
- ↪ *Remove the requirement to create regular positions when projects are renewed for a fourth year;*
- ↪ *"Streamline the process" which allows downward revision of work hours for regular professional employees;*
- ↪ *Limit access to time off due to force majeure, as well as paid leave;*
- ↪ *Downward revision of employment benefits for supernumeraries and substitutes hired for more than 6 months (insurance).*

These employer demands clearly illustrate the government's desire to make the work status of young professionals even more precarious, under the pretext of allowing itself greater flexibility to organize professional services. In short, working conditions could deteriorate for professionals, who are becoming more and more difficult to recruit.

To these sectoral issues are added intersectoral employer demands that could lead to significant decreases in income, now and upon retirement. We should remember that the average annual salary of people coming out of university still varies according to sex: \$48,400 for women and \$67,400 for men, a difference of \$19,000.¹

¹Statistics Canada; cited in the Fédération des Femmes du Québec, "Mesures d'austérité: sur le dos des femmes et des plus démunies?", February 6, 2015. Read it online: <http://www.ffq.qc.ca/2015/02/mesures-dausterite-sur-le-dos-des-femmes/>

Paradoxically, in recent years, new professional recruits are required to have more education, more professional development and must be members of a professional association to work with a clientele whose needs continue to grow.

The FPPE feels that solutions are needed to attract and retain professional personnel. For this reason, we are calling for schedule arrangements that reconcile work and family life, access to permanent positions for part-time professionals and time off for family responsibilities.

In the *Politique gouvernementale pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes*, the government of Quebec had made the commitment to ensure that government decisions (laws, programs, projects) would not discriminate against women, but would help eliminate inequalities. However, through either austerity measures or "employer demands," the government is doing the opposite. And women are paying the price.

Why does the government have so little respect for its female workers? Is it because the majority of workers in the healthcare, social service and education sectors are women, and therefore these typically "feminine" careers are considered to have less value?

Visit:

<http://www.lapasserellefppe.com/>

<http://batirlecole.com/>

<http://www.pourchangerlemonde.com/>

<http://onsedonnelesmoyens.com/>



National Special Needs Advisory Committee Report



Johanne Pomerleau, president, FPPE-CSQ

During the most recent round of negotiations in 2010, we negotiated the establishment of a national special needs advisory committee on which the three school federations affiliated with the CSQ, the Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement (FSE), the Fédération du personnel de soutien scolaire (FPSS) and the Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation (FPPE) would sit. The employer side had representatives from the MELs and the Fédération des commissions scolaires (FCSQ). This committee was also supposed to be implemented on the English side; however, unfortunately, no conclusive result was reached.

Last year, we agreed to produce a joint report with the representatives of the employers, to put into writing the topics that were discussed at the four meetings per year held over the past four years. We also wanted to highlight the joint recommendations as set forth in the wording of our collective agreements. This report was created and presented to the Conseil fédéral in January. It contains recommendations on two issues and we feel you should be informed about these items, on which we were able to reach a joint recommendation, because they concern many of you.

First joint recommendation:

INTERVENTION PLANS AS A COLLABORATIVE TOOL

1. It is essential to recall the importance of the process, collaboration and regular revision of intervention plans through support, training and the sharing of practices in terms of preparing and implementing the intervention plan.
2. It is the responsibility of the school principal or an assistant to prepare and periodically review the intervention plan, since the plan team includes a representative from the school administration.

Second joint recommendation:

SHARING INFORMATION AND RESPECTING CONFIDENTIALITY IN CONNECTION WITH OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED BY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

1. The school board must establish a clear process (policy, management support, etc.) in order to provide measures which enable the application of the Act Respecting Access to Documents Held by Public Bodies and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act.
2. However, it may be important for school personnel to share personal information about a student or another person, in particular:
 - a. when he or she is certain that this information will help with the student's development;
 - b. when a person's ignorance of this information may cause harm to the student.
3. Therefore, relevance must remain central to the sharing of information. The free and informed consent of the parents or the student over the age of 14 is mandatory to the procedure.
4. The school board must regularly communicate the procedure defining the sharing of information and respect of confidentiality to all personnel.
5. The school administration must regularly present and explain the school board's procedure to the school team, and make sure the information is given to all personnel arriving during the school year.

If you have any specific issues with either of these subjects, we invite you to contact your union, which will make the necessary representations to the Labour Relations Committee (LRC).

Although we were only able to reach joint recommendations on two issues, we feel that this committee has been beneficial for the FPPE and the two other federations. The committee has proven to be an excellent place for exchange and discussion. We hope to be able to keep it in our agreements; although the employer is proposing to abolish it, claiming it no longer serves a purpose.

WOMEN

ON THE MARCH FOR EQUALITY

To watch video



Slam by Hélène Sylvain, Conseillère pédagogique de la commission scolaire de la Rivière du Nord

*Du pays de la Laurentie
Nous voici en Austérie
En austère austérité
En pleine crise d'hystérie
Où couper est projet de société.*

*Pourtant l'argent abonde
Mais pas pour tout le monde.
Soumis aux agences de crédits
Sans chance d'un cri,
Je vous le dis :
Tout ça est immonde.*

*Sans mandat, faisant fi de la démocratie
De fiers chefs Austériens
Imposent leurs discours orduriens.
Constat : nous souffrons de médiocratie.*

*C'est la religion du grand capital,
D'une hégémonie qu'il faut qu'on avale.
Ils se veulent les apôtres de la Sainte-Économie
Alors qu'ils se vautrent dans l'opulence avec
leurs amis.*

*Sous le couvert d'un discours libéral
De façon experte et manichéiste,
Ils réclament notre bien, contre le mal.
Tiens! Une nouvelle religion monothéiste
Où les femmes encore
Sont mises à mal,
Où l'oppression encore
Subsiste
Plus bien que mal.*

*Ne me dites pas
Qu'il faut réduire les dépenses
Alors que dansent
Transnationales et banques,
Crédits d'impôts
Et paradis fiscaux.*

*Ne me dites pas
Qu'il y a une crise.
Qui cumule les profits?
Parlez-en aux grandes entreprises
Alors que les ménages basculent sous le crédit
Et que les femmes, en nage, cumulent les défis.*

*Ne me dites pas
Qu'il faille se serrer la ceinture
Sous prétexte d'embonpoint étatique.
Ce n'est pas ma signature
Ce sont leurs points médiatiques.
Écoutez-les dire :
« Il faut couper dans le gras »
...Jusqu'à l'os...térité,
Jusqu'à en « sucer la sustantifique moëlle ».*

*Ne me dites pas
Que chacun doit faire sa juste part
Quand c'est de chacune justement que tout part
Car en chacune injustement tous les torts!*

*Services publics et programmes sociaux,
Santé publique et psychodrames d'hôpitaux,
C'est histoire de femmes
Où austérité
Devient drame.
Doublement pénalisées,
C'est pour nous, Mesdames!*

*Mais où est l'analyse différenciée
Selon les sexes?
Quand on veut faire avancer ses propres idées,
C'est vrai que c'est plus facile de la mettre à
l'index.*

*Ne me dites pas
Qu'en éducation
Nous sommes une trop grande dépense
Et que c'est la fin de la récréation.
C'est sûr, quand on y pense,
Nier notre contribution,
C'est encourager l'ignorance
Et nous obliger à leur omnipotence.*

*Ne me dites pas
Que tout le monde doit mettre l'épaule à la roue
Alors qu'à répétition,
On nous rabroue :
Réductions, abolitions, restrictions,
Ostracisation!
Des services de garde
Qu'on remet en question
Jusqu'aux sévices qu'ils gardent
En toute domination.*

*Ne me dites pas
Que tout est perdu.
Selon cette médecine de cheval
Des accroissements sont quand même prévus.
Réjouissons-nous! C'est la totale!
Accroissement des inégalités de revenus
Accroissement des inégalités politiques et sociales
Accroissement des inégalités des chances
Il y en a pour chacune d'entre nous.
Par chance!
Nous sommes de catégorie Femmes!*

*C'est comme si l'égalité n'avait plus de valeurs
Quand il est question de rigueur.
Ce n'est pas l'utopie qui est dangereuse.
C'est le dogmatisme utilisé
Par un égoïsme financier
Pour maintenir une domination belliqueuse.*

*Il est plus que temps de sortir de ce désarroi social
Qui place l'austérité comme un horizon normal.
Brandissons le bâton de la parole.
Défaisons nos boutons de camisole...
De force.
Causons dans leurs pensées
Une entorse féroce.
Réclamons l'égalité
En toute liberté, paix, justice et solidarité.*

*Mettons fin à l'invisibilité
De la classe des dépossédées
Dont nous sommes toutes.
Résistons activement à leurs mesures nécessaires.
Travaillons massivement à la fondation, coûte que
coûte,
D'un futur égalitaire
Et au diable leur culture autoritaire!*



STANDING TOGETHER

AGAINST

AUSTERITY!

FEMMES EN MARCHÉ POUR L'ÉGALITÉ



SOLIDAIRES CONTRE L'AUSTÉRITÉ!

Le Collectif 8 mars :

Whenever equality among women and men is threatened, it is strength in numbers and solidarity that allow women to push forward and hold on to their achievements.

The scissors represents cuts made by the Quebec government, in terms of both public services and social programs. However, women comprise the majority of the workers and users of these services and programs. For this reason, they are the ones who are directly impacted by austerity measures in more ways than one.

Through the "talking stick", women voice their opposition to government action that destroys all of the progress made by their struggles.

This voice is strengthened by the values of the World March of Women (WMW): equality, solidarity, freedom, justice and peace. In this year of action for the WMW, women are on the march, standing tall and strong!

[Dépliant de la Journée internationale des femmes](#)

The MMF will take action in Quebec and internationally from March 8th to October 17th, date of the final rally held in Trois-Rivières.

For more information , visit :

<http://www.mmfgc.org/>

<http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2015/en/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Marche-mondiale-des-femmes-au-Qu%C3%A9bec-2015/290686237788483>



Hats Off to You!

It is to our dismay and disappointment that we learn, at the very same time as the *Semaine de la persévérance scolaire* [Stay in School Week] is being held, of the intent of the *Ministre du Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport et de l'Enseignement supérieur* [Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports and of Higher Education] to abolish the regional edition of the *Chapeau, les filles!* [Hats Off to You!] contest, aimed at promoting vocational and technical training and non-traditional occupations for women.

To read the letter that the President of the CSQ, Louise Chabot, signed and sent to the Minister with regard to this issue, [click here](#)

RECENT JUDGMENT

Maternity, discrimination and disability insurance: Victory for the FPPE



Josianne Lavoie, Lawyer
FPPE Syndical Counsellor

During the 2012-2013 school year, a member union of the FPPE filed a grievance with regard to the school board's decision to refuse the request of a professional, on unpaid parental leave, for an early termination of her parental leave.

As per the collective agreement, the professional intended to terminate her unpaid parental leave before the originally planned date. The employer refused because the employee was unemployable since she had just been diagnosed with leukemia. The professional wanted to terminate her parental leave so she could take advantage of disability insurance benefits. The school board suggested she use her annual vacation as an accommodation measure.

The union, represented by Brigitte Venne, attorney for the FPPE, raised two arguments in support of her grievance. First, the union argued that the collective agreement grants this right to the professional, and the employer has no discretion to refuse to terminate the unpaid parental leave. All the agreement requires is that the professional gives the employer 21 or 30 days' notice, as the case may be. In this case, this condition had been met. Moreover, the Union argued that the professional was the victim of discrimination based on grounds prohibited by the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*¹ because the cause of the infirmity should be treated as a disability.

In his decision², the arbitrator sided with the union's interpretation of the collective agreement. The professional who became disabled during her unpaid parental leave was able to terminate it, return to her job and take advantage of the benefits inherent to her position, including disability insurance.

The professional's ability to perform her duties has no impact on her right to terminate her parental leave. The collective agreement grants a right to the professional and the employer had no discretion to refuse the advance notice that the unpaid parental leave would be terminated, with notice. The arbitrator confirmed that the union's argument was sufficient to support the grievance. However, he ruled with regard to discrimination by affirming that the employer's refusal was discriminatory. The arbitrator also agreed with the union's opinion that leukemia,

cancer of the blood, must be viewed as a disability under the *Charter*. According to him, the courts' broad interpretation of the *Charter* includes this type of disease in the concept of disability.

Finally, the court agreed that the employer's refusal was unreasonable and went against the requirements of good faith. In this case, the employer's refusal would transfer the risk onto the professional, affecting the parental leave she thought she would enjoy without health problems.

The arbitrator concluded that in this case, the refusal would exploit the situation to the employer's advantage. In fact, he stated that by suggesting that she use her vacation time, the employer was taking advantage of her vulnerability and abusing its power. The arbitrator called the employer's actions opportunistic. He stressed that, in terms of disability insurance, the employer should consider that it does not gain or lose anything by paying the professional what she is owed.

The school board, unhappy with the decision, asked the Superior Court to review this decision. The Superior Court judge refused to change the decision and confirmed the arbitrator's ruling. The parties returned before the arbitrator to settle the damages owed to the professional. In addition to the disability insurance benefits she was entitled to, the arbitrator ordered the School Board to pay \$7,500 for moral damages.

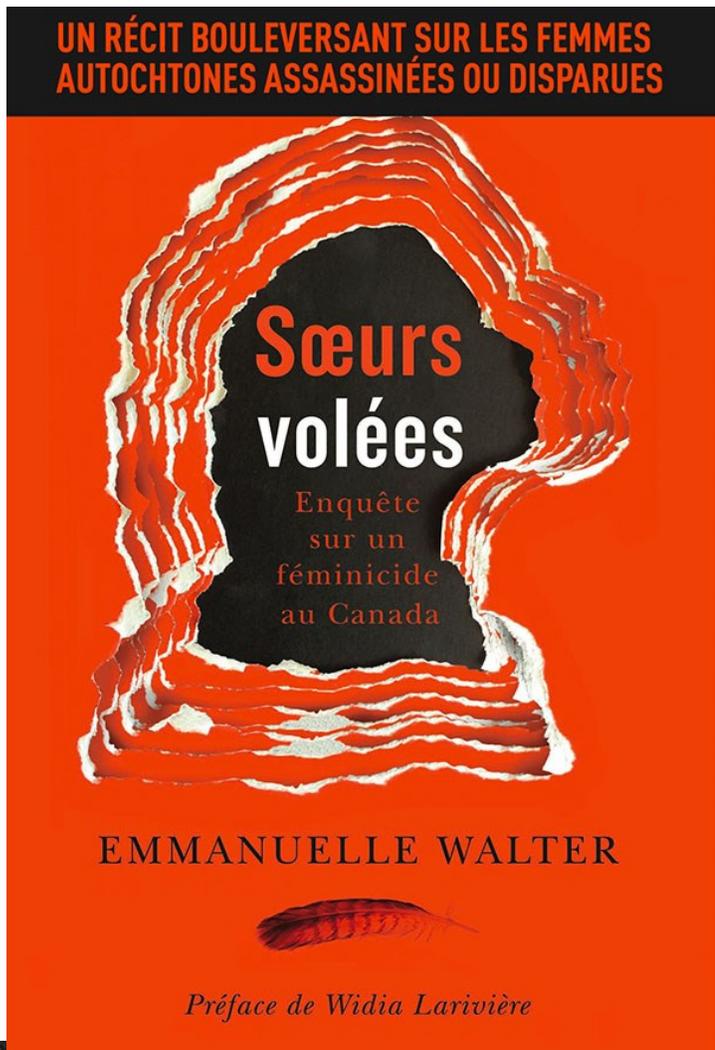
This is an important decision for all FPPE members because the arbitrator points out that it is the professional's responsibility to terminate her parental leave in order to take advantage of disability insurance. All professionals are entitled to this plan and it is an act of abuse for the employer to try and prevent them from taking advantage of it. Especially in the face of circumstances as tragic as becoming ill right after giving birth. Do not hesitate to contact your union representative if you are in a situation in which you must terminate your parental leave.

¹Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, chapter C-12, section 16. (hereafter: Charter)

²COMMISSION SCOLAIRE DE LA RIVIÈRE DU NORD and SYNDICAT DES PROFESSIONNELLES ET PROFESSIONNELS DE L'ÉDUCATION DE LAURENTIDES-LANAUDIÈRE (SPPELL), SAE 8616.

³COMMISSION SCOLAIRE DE LA RIVIÈRE DU NORD and SYNDICAT DES PROFESSIONNELLES ET PROFESSIONNELS DE L'ÉDUCATION DE LAURENTIDES-LANAUDIÈRE (SPPELL), Sentence 8851.

 *Suggestion de lecture*



"Vulnerability breeds vulnerability. Death lies in ambush. Inadequate social assistance and media indifference amplify this hyper-fragility. Aboriginal women are overrepresented among this livid and silent group. Blown around like straw, twigs, snowflakes, ephemeral, invisible."

Since 1980, nearly 1,200 Canadian Amerindian women have been murdered or have vanished against a background of almost total indifference. Proportionally, this shocking number is the equivalent of 55,000 French women or 7,000 Québécois women.

In this heartbreaking account written after a lengthy investigation, Emmanuelle Walter tells the story of two teenagers, Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander. Originally from Western Québec, they were reported missing in September 2008. Through photographic records, newspaper clippings and official documents, the reporter explores, appalled, these lives cut short. *Sœurs volées* is proof that femicide definitely exists in Canada.

With text by Widia Larivière, Laurie Odjick, Connie Greyeyes and Helen Knott.

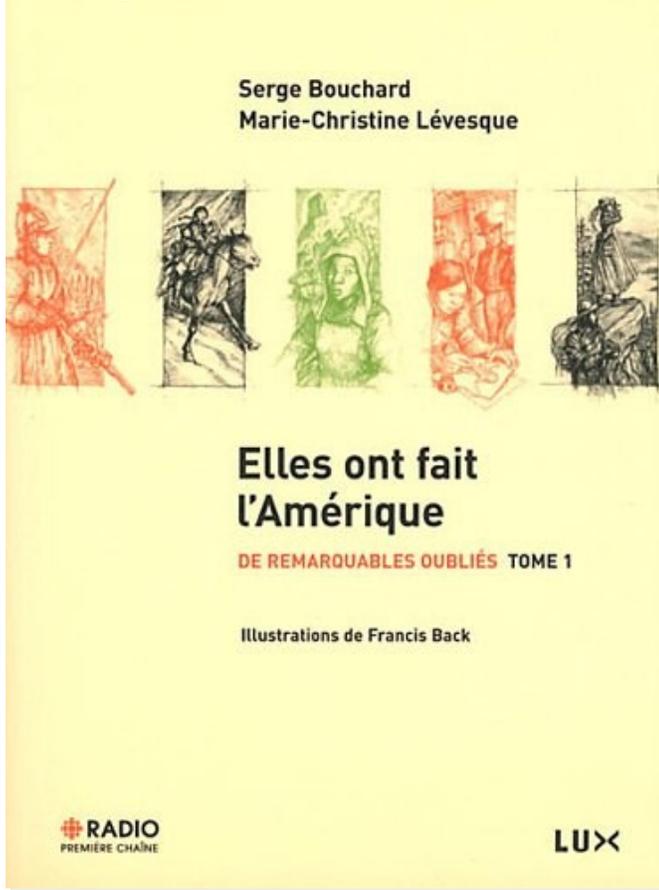
Emmanuelle Walter a freelance journalist. She has worked for Libération, Arrêt sur images, Le Nouvel Observateur, ARTE Radio and Terra eco. She has lived in Montréal for the past several years.

ISBN: 978-2-89596-191-8
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 Publisher Lux



A LA SORTIE DU VILLAGE, VERS OTTAWA. PHOTO RÉMI LEROUX.

CLOSE



Women are absent from America's official history -- is this not repeated often enough? Amerindians of course, but all the others too, without cultural distinction: Inuit, Canadians, English, Blacks, French and Métis. Many of them are exceptional women whose intelligence and character helped forge this vast continent. *Elles ont fait l'Amérique* brings to life the achievements of fifteen of these "outstanding forgotten women"; strong but invisible heroes, pioneers, adventurers, diplomats, scientists, explorers and artists.

This book is inspired by the material and the philosophy from the radio series entitled *De remarquables oubliés*, produced and broadcast by the Radio-Canada's Première Chaîne. The literary version gives new life to the authors' objective: to look at history from a different angle and shine light on the ordinary people, who are often the true actors.

Serge Bouchard is an anthropologist with a passion for Amerindian cultures. He has published some fifteen works, including L'homme descend de l'ourse; Récits de Mathieu Mestokosho, chasseur innu; the Lieux communs series (with Bernard Arcand); as well as Confessions animales, Bestiaire I and II. He hosts the De remarquables oubliés and Les chemins de travers shows on Radio-Canada's Première Chaîne .

Following a career as an advertising designer and editor, Marie-Christine Lévesque took a break from the hustle and bustle of the world to write under the tamarack trees.

ISBN: 978-2-89596-097-3

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Publisher Lux

La Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels (FPPE-CSQ) has put together some reading suggestions by librarians from various school boards, for International Women's Day. They are thought-provoking novels and stories about the work that has been accomplished, and that which remains to be done, by women from here and abroad. The books are suitable for different age groups.

http://www.lapasserellefppe.com/?page_id=960

Latest News

Premium for psychologists

Last week, we learned that the MSSS had sent out a bulletin to establishments in the health and social services community notifying them that the premium granted to psychologists since January 29, 2012 would no longer be assumed by the Department as of April 1. Psychologists from the healthcare community have begun to receive notice that this bonus will cease to be paid to them on that date.

On Wednesday, March 4, Stéphane Moreau, attorney and spokesperson at the bargaining table, and I, have a meeting with the *Comité patronal de négociation des commissions scolaires francophones (CPNCF)* to discuss the situation in schools. We will keep you informed of the outcome of this meeting through the unions.

Johanne Pomerleau
FPPE President