

LA PASSERELLE NÉGO

Message from the president

Taking a stand as a Federation and a Front Commun

Between September 25 and October 10, we'll be holding general assemblies at all FPPE unions, so that members can vote on the advisability of a Front Commun strike.

By October 13, 420,000 public service workers (CSQ, FTQ, CSN and APTS) will be doing the same. It would be a historic strike and mobilization movement unprecedented in the last 50 years.

The reason is simple: **the government treats us with contempt.** While Members of Parliament have been offered a 30% increase, and police officers

with the Sûreté du Québec have been offered a 21% increase, the wage offer to government employees is 9% over 5 years, plus a lump sum of \$1,000.

The government is even going so far as to **attack the RREGOP**. It currently suggests that each contributed year should count for 1.4% instead of the current 2%. It thinks it can keep them captive until they're 65.

Based on this scenario, retirement after 35 years of service at a salary of \$85,000 is now equivalent to a pension of \$59,500 before age 65, and \$43,200 from age 65 onwards (subsequently offset by RRQ coordination, which is 7%). Based on the scenario presented by the government, the amounts will be \$43,600 at ages 60 and 65. This represents an unacceptable reduction of \$16,300 from ages 60 to 65.

This weekend, **there will be a major Common Front protest in Montreal**, where a powerful warning must be sent to the government. Strong attendance is crucial.

We are now in a period of intensified pressure tactics.

As far as the renewal of the collective agreement for professional staff is concerned, despite sustained discussions and some progress, we received few answers regarding our priorities. We would like to improve the situation of our members with regard to monetary aspects. We also want to improve working conditions so that they are more appealing, notably by recognizing the right to work from home and by obtaining levers to act on overload.



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Currently, we are conducting an extensive **media tour across all regions of Quebec** to talk about the working conditions of professional staff. The tour began on September 6 and will end in early October, with one or two press conferences a week.

After years of austerity and wage increases that barely keep up with inflation, there's no way we're going to accept another slap in the face.

And we will get there in solidarity with our Front Commun colleagues.

Solidarity!

Jacques Landry,
President, FPPE(CSQ)



NATIONAL RALLY FOR OUR PUBLIC SERVICES



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2023
MONTREAL
JEANNE-MANCE PARK 1 PM



On September 23rd, we must take part in the Front commun's national rally in Montréal.

The event, which will take place on Saturday, September 23 at 1 p.m., at Jeanne-Mance Park in Montreal, will welcome comedian Rosalie Vaillancourt as host and Les Louanges as a musical performance.

Let us be tens of thousands to tell the government that we care for our public services. Let us remind him that the future of these services depends on adequate funding and working and salary conditions that attract and retain staff in health and social services, education, and higher education.

Open to all !

When: Septembre 23, 2023, 1 PM
Where: Jeanne-Mance Park, Montreal
For more information: frontcommun.org



Status of the negotiation tables for professional staff

We had a short vacation at the tables, actively negotiating until the end of July and then quickly resuming in mid-August, hoping to reach agreement with management on several important points.

Despite several negotiating sessions, the list of issues on which agreement has been reached is very short. Several hours were spent discussing the employer's demands and priorities, and it's difficult to discuss union priorities.

All the employer demands presented in the detailed filing at the beginning of April remain in play. These include a **much slower and delayed progression through the ranks for people who are not working full-time**, regardless of the reason. There's also **the willingness to assign people on disability to any temporary task and granting more power to the employer's doctor.** The employer also wants **the union to refrain from criticizing the school system publicly.** Furthermore, management wishes to **severely attack employment security in the English-speaking sector**, proposing that those whose jobs are abolished be obliged to accept another job anywhere in Quebec, starting in the second year of layoff. This obligation is currently limited to positions available within a 50 km radius.

Overall, **we find that management is unwilling to adopt concrete solutions to make working conditions more attractive**, to ensure the retention of current professionals, and to encourage young professionals to choose the school system. Instead, the employer's strategy is to muzzle the unions to prevent them from speaking out on working conditions within the system, and to give school service centres and school boards more leeway to deal with the shortage of professionals rather than trying to curb the exodus. Rather than trying to attract more professionals to schools and centres, the solution is to punish employees for not working full-time. Needless to say, **we don't share this vision at all**, and it's often discouraging to listen to the employer side at the table.

Quite to the contrary, since October 2022, **the union side has been putting forward some fifty proposals to raise the profile of the work and expertise of professionals.**

Many of these solutions are cost-free for the employer, requiring only a review of certain practices. However, the employer is determined to protect its management rights at all costs and is not open to our ideas. We propose, among other things, **to define and extend the right to teleworking, propose a four-day work week, recognize more leave for family responsibilities, refund professional association fees for all members, recognize the value of graduate degrees, etc.**

At best, the employer replies that it understands our demands but that they are not realistic in the current context, and in the worst cases, it is simply closed without explanation. The only areas where we can see a breach opening concern union demands that could be in line with employer priorities, such as the mentoring of trainees.

The situation is very similar at the Cree and Kativik negotiation tables. Although the pace of negotiation is slower, we are making the same observations in relation to employer positions. All the specified employer demands are still in play. Furthermore, despite detailed presentations and discussions on a number of union demands, we received no hint of any intention to open up. This is particularly the case with our demand for recognition and flexibility on teleworking, which the employer doesn't seem interested in giving up its right to manage. However, we have demonstrated with concrete examples that such advances in flexibility would undoubtedly lead to greater retention of professionals.

Against this background, we are starting a busy fall at the negotiation tables. We meet once or twice a week, and the negotiating team is increasing its efforts to reach a satisfactory agreement on the sectoral elements. However, we understand that we need to step up our mobilization if we hope to see significant results, which are slow in coming.

Feel free to contact your union if you have any questions or comments about the negotiations. We need you!

Your negotiating team