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## Possible Adjustments to Our Salary Structure

**Enjoy some good news! The Treasury Board responded positively to our repeated demands to begin discussions on making the adjustments required to our salary scales. After refusing to discuss this at the sectoral table, we're happy to hear that our employers have agreed that preliminary discussions can take place at a parallel table, with representatives from the Treasury Board and the Ministry of Education for the employers' side and from FNEEQ, the CSN, FEC and the CSQ on the union side. Note that our demands seek to improve entry-level salaries for teachers and also to recognize the true value of masters and doctoral degrees. As of the time of writing, meeting dates had not yet been set.**

### The Sectoral Table Waltz

Following the FNEEQ *Regroupement Cégep* meeting on February 23, we invited our employers' representatives to engage in intensive negotiations at the sectoral table until March 12. Our goal was to be able to present a progress report on the negotiations and to consult union members on the priorities for the FNEEQ Strategy committee for the next stage of the negotiations.

This exercise did not provide the hoped-for results and with 15 fateful (or symbolic!) days remaining before March 31, we are forced to recognize that for our employers negotiating committee, time does not seem to move at the same speed as it does for our union side. Yet another confirmation of Einstein's theory. However, the meetings held were not completely fruitless, as you will see below.

After hearing a report on the discussions at the sectoral table, the *Regroupement cégep* decided to invite you to add your efforts to those of the Negotiation and Mobilization committee

to accelerate the negotiations and to obtain a satisfactory resolution. A letter, signed by all union presidents, will be sent to the Minister of Education to reaffirm the clear need for actual teaching resources to be added in the cégep system. We will ask for a meeting in order to clearly explain to Ms. Courchesne the reasons why we need the government to invest in the student-teacher relationship that is the primary mission of the cégeps.

We also invite you to participate in large numbers in the demonstration on March 20 in Montreal. It must provide a clear message to the government that public sector employees cannot continue to be impoverished and that we will not settle for peanuts. In a context where the decree does not allow us to use pressure tactics at the level we might otherwise, everyone needs to be there. We will be picketing in front of our colleges on March 31 to mark the last day of the 2005 decree, but only to show that we are determined to obtain a satisfactory resolution of the negotiations, even if they must continue beyond March 31.

**Let's be there !**

**Demonstration, Saturday, 20 March, 2010 in Montreal**

## The Issues Discussed at the Sectoral Table

Since the last Info-Négo, one and one-half days of negotiations have taken place with the *Comité patronale de négociation des collèges* (the CPNC). The themes discussed are as follows:

### Resources for Teaching

The Negotiation and Mobilization committee once again reaffirmed the importance of adding teaching resources. It “raised the awareness” of the employers’ side by presenting the following statistics :

Since 1997, the number of managers across the cegep system has increased by 15%, professionals by 30%, while the number of teachers has increased by only 3%!! After 20 years of budget cuts and only a modest reinvestment in teaching, how much more juice can be squeezed from the lemon ?

The members of the Negotiations committee were also quite eloquent regarding the importance of supporting students for their success. They explained how having too many students make it difficult to fulfill this function of our jobs. When the norm is set at 166 students per teacher, the number of hours in a week is insufficient to provide the students with the additional help they need outside of class. In addition, while special services for students with special needs are needed, the Negotiation committee made our employers aware that neither professionals nor support staff are

able to provide these students with the assistance they need in relation to the course materials being taught.

### Productivity Increases

How can we achieve savings in the organization of our work, without increasing our workload? That is the challenge. The Negotiation committee proposed to the CPNC that province-wide program committees be set up for the next cycle of competency revisions. The idea was to harmonize the first two years as one goes along while programs are being revised. There are many reasons for such an approach: it would make it easier for students to change from one college to another during their studies, it would streamline the passage from an attestation of collegial studies program (AEC) to a DEC program. The savings generated could be used to increase departmental release.

Finally, discussions continued on relatively peripheral demands : the calculation of seniority and experience, the general offer of service, delaying vacation following a sick leave, access to leaves for nonpermanent teachers, and working conditions in continuing education. The clarifications needed to both understand the problems to be resolved and to put in place solutions were the subject of discussion.

## INVITATION – DEMONSTRATION

### Our mobilization is more necessary than ever!

The people on the other side of the bargaining table have to see how determined we are.

There should be as many of us as possible at the big national demonstration to show the government that we are determined to obtain respectful working conditions and decent pay.

### Time is running out!

Invite your co-workers, neighbours, family, friends, acquaintances — everybody who wants to demonstrate together for public services!

**See you there!**

Time is flying!

**I'LL BE THERE !**

