

The Negotiations Tango...

On March 12, the FNEEQ *Regroupement cégep* may be asked to debate an action plan to be brought to union general assemblies the following week. In reality, there are still no exploratory negotiations, although the *Regroupement cégep* gave such a mandate to its representatives and Mme Gagnon-Tremblay supposedly did the same, which should have sent a message to our employers' negotiators to begin intensive negotiations.

We are not at present -- will we be one day? -- in a period where the two negotiating parties, having put all of the important issues on the table, are working towards finding solutions to all of them. If there are any steps forward, they are tiny ones. There is little chance that the meetings scheduled this week will allow us to see an overall approach to finding a resolution, satisfactory or otherwise.

The situation is more or less the same at all of the sectoral tables across the public and parapublic sector. The employers' negotiating committees have obviously not received the mandates needed to allow a real intensification of negotiations. However, our sectoral negotiation session was not completely useless...

Resources for Teaching

Regarding the addition of resources, the CPNC told us that they went to the Treasury Board to discuss the possibility of using the federal transfer funds, column D, the anticipated savings to come linked to projected student enrolment declines and upcoming retirements. A response is expected before March 31!

As for an eventual addition of teaching resources, our employers' reaffirmed their priorities: continuing education, the entry into the profession, students with special needs and programs with low student enrolment.

In addition, at the same meeting, we also discussed at length our demands for the addition of resources for actual classroom teaching. In particular, we explained the problems and absurdities that result between the real needs for teaching resources as calculated by the parameters of the individual workload (CI) formula and the financing formula for the colleges. In the current context, it is very difficult for the two parties to find a simple solution to an eventual addition of teaching resources in the cegep system.

Other demands were discussed and clarified, including the general offer of services (GOS), the calculation of experience, students with special needs, delaying vacation until after a sick leave, and access to leaves for nonpermanent teachers in relation to the stability of working groups.

Two meetings adding up to a total of one and one-half days are scheduled for next week. As we approach the deadline date, the pressure is mounting at the negotiation table. In such a context, we call on everyone to take part in the demonstration on March 20. The message must be clear: we want a negotiated renewal of our collective agreement, but above all, we want a real recognition of our work. We are always available to work to finding a resolution by March 31... but in negotiations as in the dance, it takes two to tango!

Common Front National Demonstration
Saturday, March 20, 2010
Gathering point: Place du Canada,
Departure time: 1:00 p.m.