Pregnant or nursing workers

PREVENTIVE WITHDRAWAL, A MEASURE AT RISK?
New client?
Get a $30 dividend for each new home or auto insurance policy taken out before December 31, 2016.*

Already insured with The Personal?
Get a $30 dividend for each home or auto insurance policy in force on March 31, 2016.

Dividends will be paid starting in the fall of 2016.

* These dividends will be paid on any new home or auto insurance policies that take effect in 2016 and are in force on December 31, 2016, or that take effect in 2017.
A great union activist has left us. Yvon Charbonneau, President of the CEQ from 1970 to 1978 and from 1982 to 1988, passed away in April of this year at the age of 75. We are saddened by the loss of this great man who significantly shaped the history of unionism and that of our union confederation. Over the course of his journey, during which he served as a union activist, a politician and an ambassador, he consistently advocated for education, human rights and greater social justice, drawing on his strength, his fighting spirit and his integrity.

In 2014, on the 40th anniversary of the founding of our organization, he honoured us with his presence and he recalled, with the same conviction of earlier days, the defining moment when the CEQ, then a professional association, became a union confederation. It is to him that we owe the great confederation that the CSQ has become: a force in education and in many sectors of the public services. We also owe him the concept of the great common fronts, which have now become a necessity. Let’s also remember that in 1972, he went to prison, along with the presidents of the CSN and the FTQ, Marcel Pepin and Louis Laberge, to defend our rights.

In an article in the magazine *Forces*, published in 2014, Yvon Charbonneau outlined his vision of the situation in Québec. In his view, it was clear that the government would wage an economic battle, but above all, ideological combat. He then championed the idea that pulling out of this crisis would require collective effort, and unprecedented social mobilization, in which every one would take part.

What comes to mind now, from this interview, is a striking remark: “The working conditions of union members cannot evolve in a sustainable manner without comparable evolution of society as a whole. The unions cannot be an island of progress in a sea of stagnation and degradation of general working and living conditions.” Yvon Charbonneau had once again expressed his profound belief that unions must not only fight for better working conditions but also for greater social justice. Thank you, President Charbonneau, for leaving us with such an inspiring union legacy.

As I look back over our recent year of union struggles, I strongly believe that we have taken action and pushed back to achieve fairness and social justice, on several fronts. First of all, in terms of our working conditions and the promotion of public services in childcare, education and health and social services. We have also, with pride and determination, called for an end to the destruction of the common good and the attacks on the fundamental social rights of Quebecers.

This battle is not over: the Couillard government persists in its endeavour to unravel our social fabric. As long as it refuses to change direction, we shall continue to fight for the well-being of all Quebecers.

Louise Chabot
President
WHEN WILL THE AMOUNTS DUE BE PAID?

The lump sum for 2015 and the increase of April 1, 2016 will be paid after the signing of the various collective agreements, which include the sectoral and intersectoral provisions. The payment procedures have yet to be determined in the sectoral agreements.

Generally speaking, it takes one or two months to apply the new scales after the agreements have been signed. Payment of retroactivity, both for the increase and the lump sum, may take up to a month longer.

WHAT HOURS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR THE LUMP SUM?

All hours actually worked over the course of the period are counted for the lump sums. This includes overtime¹ and all other periods for which an individual receives compensation (maternity, paternity or adoption leave benefits, parental leave indemnities, disability insurance premiums including those from the CNESST, the SAAQ or the employer in the event of a workplace accident).

HOW DOES THE LUMP SUM APPLY FOR TEACHERS?

- School boards: the calculation of lump sums is based on 200 days of work. For the period from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, teaching staff will receive $2.74 per regular days paid. In 2019, the daily amount will be $1.46.
- Colleges: the lump sums will be calculated based on full time equivalence (FTE). For an FTE, they will receive $547.89 in 2015 and $292.21 in 2019.

WHAT WILL MY INCREASE BE UPON INTEGRATION INTO THE SALARY STRUCTURE IN 2019?

The increases that will be paid upon integration into the enhanced salary structure will vary according to the job titles and the salary steps held prior to the integration. To calculate your adjustment, consult the simulation tool, which is available at monsalaire.lacsq.org.

You should remember that integration may cause you to change step (lower or higher). On the other hand, the change in step does not eliminate the regular advancements in step that are stipulated in your collective agreement. Nor does it change your level of seniority.

A joint committee has been set up to solve issues that may arise from the implementation of the structure and to agree on solutions.

¹ No increase in the lump sum applies, even if overtime is taken into account.
WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE PREMIUMS SUSPENDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AT THE END OF THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT?

The government will grant retroactivity as of April 1, 2015 in order to make up for the period during which premiums associated with serious behavioural disorders, CHSLDs, the Great North and psychologists were suspended. It should be noted that the premium for psychologists is now accessible to those working in the school network.

WHEN DOES THE NEW PREMIUM FOR SKILLED WORKERS TAKE EFFECT?

The new attraction and retention premium negotiated for certain skilled workers will take effect when the collective agreement is signed.

This premium is the outcome of a historic battle that dragged on for more than 10 years. It will affect electricians, master electricians, pipe fitters, master pipe mechanics, mechanics, stationary engineers, carpenters, painters and certified maintenance workmen possessing the qualifications required for these job titles.

WHEN WILL THE CHANGES TO PENSION AND RETIREMENT TAKE EFFECT?

The changes to RREGOP will take effect on the following dates:

✔ New retirement criteria without actuarial reduction at 61 years or based on factor 90 (minimum 60 years), being added to the criterion 35 years of service, regardless of age, which remains unchanged: for persons who will retire starting July 2, 2019.

✔ Increase of the actuarial reduction from 4 to 6%: for persons who will retire starting July 2, 2020.

✔ Possibility of contributing to RREGOP for a 39th and a 40th year: starting January 1, 2017.

With regard to the first two points, transitional measures were agreed for persons who will have started gradual retirement before the date the legislation governing these changes will be tabled at the National Assembly or within 100 days following this date.

CONTACT YOUR UNION

Planning your retirement? Intending to retire very soon? Under certain conditions, the new measures may not apply to persons who have started gradual retirement. Contact your union to make sure you follow the right procedure.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT PARENTAL RIGHTS?

The changes below will be made to parental rights for persons whose maternity, paternity or adoption leave begins on or after the date the collective agreement covering such rights was signed:

✔ New formula for calculating the complementary indemnities during maternity leave ensuring 100% net income replacement for all.

✔ Twenty weeks of service required to receive complementary indemnities during a paternity or adoption leave.

INCREMENT IN PREMIUMS EXPRESSED IN DOLLARS

Certain premiums and allowances are expressed as a fixed amount. The isolation and remote region premiums are an example of this. These latter premiums will be increased by 1.5% in 2016, 1.75% in 2017, 2% in 2018 and 2% in 2019.
Pregnant or nursing workers

PREVENTIVE WITHDRAWAL, STILL IN THE EMPLOYER’S LINE OF FIRE

PIERRE LEFEBVRE CSQ Advisor

In 2014, more than 33,000 women in Québec, a third of whom are from the education and health sectors, benefited from preventive withdrawal for pregnant or nursing women. These women alone counted for a little over half of the births in working women, according to the most recent statistics from the Commission des normes, de l’équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESt, previously the CSST). Yet, the program continues to remain a target for employers due to the costs it entails...

Québec is the only state where this type of compensation is available. When a physician believes the work of a pregnant or nursing worker exposes them or their unborn child to physical dangers, the employer must reassign the worker to duties that are free from these dangers. This progressive measure was implemented in 1979, when the Act respecting occupational health and safety was adopted.

A DIFFICULT EXERCISE IN MODERNIZATION

Remaining virtually unchanged for 35 years, the occupational health and safety program needs updating. Talks are currently underway in a sub-committee of the Comité consultatif du travail et de la main-d’œuvre. This joint body, under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour, groups the four unions (CSQ, CSD, CSN and FTQ) and Québec’s biggest employer associations. However, their diverging interests make the exercise a difficult one.

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

During the CNESt’s presentations to the members of the sub-committee, the employers in attendance asked many questions about the costs associated with the program, which could reach $260 million in 2016. The Conseil du patronat du Québec believes the situation is largely the fault of health professionals, who have increased the number of potential hazards and promote a precautionary principle, despite a lack of scientific proof regarding the actual risks¹.

For the CSQ and women’s groups, this translates into carelessness on the part of employers with regards to prevention and attempts at reassignment. Furthermore, more and more women are present on the job market, thanks in great part to the network of subsidized public childcare providers.

ESSENTIAL MEASURES

The goal of the Act respecting occupational health and safety is to eliminate dangers at the source. In the case of pregnant workers, even if this objective cannot be wholly achieved (for example, the danger of a fetus contracting an infectious disease), options for reassignment do exist. This is the best way to ensure the safety of pregnant workers and their unborn children. Keep in mind that compensation is given only if no reassignment is offered.

The right to working conditions that respect the dignity, health and safety of workers, as well as the right to social security and an adequate standard of living, are all part of the fundamental rights of all persons, as is the right to special assistance for motherhood and childhood². And the CSQ will make sure that no one forgets!

PROTECTIVE REASSIGNMENT
FOR PREGNANT WORKERS

If you are pregnant and your work constitutes a hazard to your health or the health of your unborn child, don’t wait: talk to your doctor and your union.

Prevent and cure

For advice and solutions, consult your union or lacsq.org/sst
New technologies in education

**A PLUS FOR LEARNING?**

FÉLIX CAUCHY-CHAREST CSQ Advisor

More than 74% of teachers consider new technologies a plus in their classrooms. This is according to a recent study by the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) and Media Smarts, Canada’s Centre for Digital and Media Literacy. Yet the study, which was conducted with over 4000 educators, revealed that many encounter obstacles that prevent them and their students from having access to these technologies. CSQ News met with school personnel to take stock of the situation in our schools.

For Dany Gravel, a math teacher and member of the CSQ’s Youth Committee, these tools help attract the attention of students and get them interested in the subject. “We need to stay with the times, even though the subject matter remains the same. Technology, such as interactive whiteboards or some tablet and smartphone applications, are tools to help us present the subject.”

He confirms using his interactive whiteboard often as a teaching tool. “It’s practical to model math problems, and explain problems and functions in another way,” explains he who is also a member of the Syndicat de l’enseignement du Lanaudière (SEL-CSQ).

It’s the same thing for Marie-Claude Tremblay, a technician in special education and member of the Syndicat du soutien en éducation de la Pointe-de-l’Île (SSEPI-CSQ). She sees a benefit, as much for personnel as for students and parents. 

“It’s certain that for young people, having access to these technologies is motivating. As a mother, I see the benefits for my children. But not everyone has the same access.”

**A DIGITAL DIVIDE**

Access to new technologies is unequal in schools. “The school boards don’t seem to have a unified plan,” explains Dany Gravel. “The situation varies greatly from school to school.” For example, in the school where he teaches, electronic devices that don’t belong to the school board don’t have Wi-Fi access. “Since I use apps in class – such as Plickers that allows me to digitize group responses and present results in real time – I end up having to use my own personal data package. Thankfully, my phone is able to pick up the signal inside the walls of the school!”

Access to Wi-Fi isn’t the only issue preventing students and personnel from working with technology. “Some schools simply aren’t ready to bring in all of this technology,” says Marie-Claude Tremblay. “Not enough electrical outlets, a lack of training for personnel, a lack of motivation by the administration, it’s far from being uniform.”

Cassandra Forcier, a special education technician and member of the Syndicat de Champlain (CSQ), agrees. She and a colleague initiated the TES Facebook page, which aims to share resources, intervention documents and various conferences. Interviewed by CSQ News, she confirms the discrepancy in access to technologies between different schools across the school board’s territory.

**UNEQUAL ACCESS**

“In some schools, where there are lots of services and students are well-accompanied, there is an impact on their success. But, it’s unequal. I work in both a small school and a bigger one. In the first, the students have good access to technology and the support that comes with it. In the second, the students simply don’t have access. It’s not normal”, explains Cassandra Forcier.
Marie-Claude Tremblay even worries that this disparity will create competition between schools in the public network. “Every school operates its own way. As there is no master plan, the differences will only increase. If some school administrations decide to focus on the digital, it will be reflected in registration numbers, especially in high schools where there are no mandatory school zones. Plus, the students from these schools will have a head start when entering cégep and university,” she believes.

Dany Gravel feels the same way. He specifies though, that at the end of the day, the teachers, not the tools, actually make the difference. “Technology allows for adapting how we teach, but it’s not a panacea. However, it’s obvious that school boards will have to consider the question and come up with a clear master plan for all schools. There exist terrific resources to help students understand the subject matter. Think of YouTube, which provides examples and clips that explain different aspects of a particular subject. If schools block access, they deprive students of tools that could help them.”

SCHOOLS NEED A DIGITAL STRATEGY

Cassandra Forcier agrees. “We are rarely offered new software. If we had the right tools, we could use students’ cell-phones for teaching. Support personnel and professionals are rarely consulted for implementing new tools. There is a lack of time for adequate training.”

For the three members, it’s clear that the school boards need to quickly reflect on the question and coordinate implementation of digital tools in schools. “The students are already on Facebook, on Snapchat, etc., and they’re there without us, without the support of the education sector. We need to invest in the technology and use it in a positive and constructive way to improve their educational experience,” concludes Marie-Claude Tremblay.

“If schools block access [to Youtube], they deprive students of tools that could help them.”
The arrival of Syrian refugees and welcoming of students among them in schools and centres across Québec has been in the news for several weeks. This is the second part of an article that reviews the challenges of equal opportunity in education for immigrants: what are the peculiarities of teaching French as a second language, and how do we help immigrant students integrate fully?

Often, school personnel in contact with students are not familiar with their native language. “During our interactions with students, we only speak French. This allows the students to quickly learn to express themselves and interact in French,” says Clément Amphyon, French as a second language high school teacher at École communautaire arménienne Sourp Hagop de Montréal and member of the Fédération du personnel de l’enseignement privé (FPEP-CSQ).

But, it is important not to restrict the exchanges these students have amongst themselves in their native language. “We deprive them of a precious learning tool if we forbid them from helping each other and making connections to their native language whenever possible,” says Réginald Fleury, education consultant for education and intercultural relations at the Commission scolaire de Montréal and member of the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels du milieu de l’éducation de Montréal (SPPMEM-CSQ).

However, we need to be able to balance. “The classes in which my students learn the fastest are those with students from different nationalities who have to speak French to express themselves,” says Thérèse Villeneuve, welcome class teacher at École Bourgeois-Champagnat primary school in Longueuil and member of the Syndicat de Champlain (CSQ).

“Even if students already speak French when they arrive, the challenge remains,” according to Réginald Fleury. “A francophone from Lebanon or Haiti also needs help integrating into Québec schools. His or her educational, cultural and language referents might be miles from Québec’s.”
It seems that the key to success resides in teamwork. “Students who don’t think in French have their work cut out for them when transferring their thoughts in French to paper. Exchanging with classmates allows them to validate their vocabulary and ideas to better structure them on paper. Teachers need to be aware of this reality and remain open to adopting strategies that promote this transfer,” he says.

“When using the right approach, learning French can progress fast. After six months, students seem to have an “a-ha moment”, and after that, learning increases rapidly,” says Clément Amphyon.

“Once students begin to understand, we can see it in their eyes. When they start playing tricks on us, joking in French, laughing at the expression il fait frite, we know they’ve got it,” says Thérèse Villeneuve, with a smile in her voice.

TOWARDS INTEGRATION AND THE “I” AS QUÉBÉCOIS

Clément Amphyon believes it’s essential for immigrants to learn French to have equal opportunities in higher education, the job market and integration. “It can be very difficult when immigrants learn, after their arrival, that the language spoken is French and not English as they might have expected, given that the federal government’s administrative process for admission is conducted entirely in English.”

Once the shock has passed, we must eliminate any hesitancy they may have. “A little while ago, a student told me she wasn’t very keen on the idea of learning French at first, but that she has finally discovered that French brings a whole new culture, different and distinct, that she is starting to learn, and especially love,” he says.

The ultimate goal, according to Réginald Fleury, is to bring immigrant students who identify as Italian, Syrian, or Moroccan to say, “I am a Québécois of Italian, Syrian or Moroccan descent.” “In fact, teaching French to immigrants opens the door to our culture, from Félix Leclerc to Fred Pellerin, and it’s essential to do so. However, we also need to connect with their culture without constantly asking how things are done in China, but rather asking that they give a presentation on the Chinese community in Montréal, for example,” he explains.

“In an ideal world, true integration would occur by connecting with immigrant role models who have succeeded in Québec, such as Dany Laferrière, René Angélil and Kim Thuy. By including these role models on television, in literature and the arts, as well as in the world of business, like we do for our own, we can show how equal opportunity for all is real and possible,” he concludes.

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Fifty-two years teaching math

THÉRÈSE VACHON DOESN’T PLAN ON RETIRING ANY TIME SOON

CLAUDE GIRARD CSQ Communications Advisor

“My greatest joy is when a young person tells me I made them love math. There are students who tell me this every year - and it inspires me to keep on teaching.”

Originally from Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon in Beauce, Thérèse Vachon settled in La Malbaie in 1965, where she has worked her whole life. After more than a half century of teaching, she remains passionate. How? It’s simple. “Young people are my motivation,” she says.

She loves both young people and math. “The rules of French evolve over time, but in math, 2 + 2 will always equal 4. That will never change and it’s reassuring. Of course, we need to adapt our teaching with the times, but mathematical truths remain unchanged.”

AN ACCESSIBLE EDUCATOR

“Teenagers today are polite and thoughtful. On a regular basis, when leaving class, they wish me a nice weekend, tell me they love me and to take good care of myself. Previous generations didn’t have the same attitude.”

Mrs T – as her students affectionately call her – admits that it may be different for other teachers. Jokingly, she says she gets such respect because she has become an antique. The high regard from her students may be because she remains available when they need help with their studies.

“Every week, I offer six or seven times, either during lunch or early in the morning, for them to come and see me if they need extra help. Many students take advantage of these moments to ask for additional explanations.” Her availability is facilitated by the fact that her responsibilities have been reduced by 50%.

“Above all, I hope that my students take responsibility for themselves and progress through their own hard work. I also want them know that if they need help, I’m always there to help them,” says she, who is also a member of the Sœurs de la Charité de Québec community.
CHOICES THAT LEAD TO HAPPINESS

Beyond teaching, Mrs T tries to provide her students with the strategies they need to face life. “The goal of teaching is to provide guidance to young people to help them make choices that will make them happy. We shouldn’t force a student to enter long-term studies when they don’t enjoy school. It may be better to guide them towards vocational education diplomas. What’s important is their happiness.”

THE RIGHT WORDS TO PREVENT SUICIDE

The only dark moments in her long career are the deeply troubled young people whose paths she’s crossed and who decided to end their lives. She shares these horrible tragedies with her students during National Suicide Prevention Week.

“I especially remember a young person who was in my class at 3:50 pm and who took his life at 4:30 pm. How can I forget? It’s impossible. And what about the student who waited in vain until the very last minute to hear the words he never heard his father speak, “I love you”, before committing the final act. These are the magic words that offer the best prevention against suicide.”

TECHNOLOGY DOESN’T REPLACE LISTENING

The educator emphasizes that in spite of smart phones and tablets, teenagers still need someone they can confide in.

“Electronic gadgets will never replace the need to be heard and loved. It’s why I try to stay close to my students. I joke with them and we talk a lot. When I feel that one of them is going through a difficult time, I don’t hesitate to remind them that I’m here.”

“It’s important to keep the door open. Life isn’t always easy for teenagers who live through the failures of their parents. They might even turn to drugs. When that happens, I try to help them understand that it’s just a crutch that doesn’t help and is harmful to their health,” she says with great sadness.

Above all, Thérèse Vachon never forgets to tell her students how wonderful they are. “We don’t always know what they’re going through. They need to know that despite difficult situations, they are beautiful and need to trust life. Momentary challenges are not always useless. They help develop determination, a tool that will help them their whole lives.”

PRECIOUS SUPPORT AND UNFORGETTABLE TRIBUTES

Thérèse Vachon has no doubt: daily contact with her students has kept her young. Without forgetting that she has always benefited from the support and collaboration of her teaching colleagues, as well as the school’s administration. They even surprised her last February 4, with a very special tribute.

“In spite of smart phones and tablets, teenagers still need someone they can confide in.
When problems become challenges

MARTIN CAYOUETTE FPSS-CSQ Communications Advisor

“There’s always something new, we constantly need to stay informed, up-to-date, find resource persons to help us buy the best product, at the best price, with the best guarantee and lowest shipping rates. Every day brings a challenge,” says Lorraine Provost, buyer at the Commission scolaire des Patriotes for nine years.

When purchases run over $5000, she must hold a tendering process to find the best supplier in order to meet the school board’s procurement policy. “We also need to make sure that everything is in accordance with the Act respecting contracting by public bodies,” she specifies.

AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX PROFESSION

“According to ministerial requirements, the Act Respecting Contracting by Public Bodies, we are now subject to procurement rules and principles of accountability. We are being asked increasingly to make group purchases, which we do with the Centre collégial des services regroupés, the Centre de services partagés du Québec, and the Comité d’achats regroupés de la Montérégie et de l’Estrie, for who I am a bargaining agent,” says Lorraine Provost.

There is no particular training to become a buyer. It requires a good sense of analysis, familiarity with the GRICS purchasing software, and an understanding of the policies and laws that regulate purchasing.

Lorraine Provost is also a facilitator for schools. “We help them with put together calls for tenders, prepare quotes, and follow-up on bids. Often, in the end, schools proceed with the purchase themselves, but we’ve made sure they followed the right procedures.”

NOTHING IS LEFT TO CHANCE

In addition to purchasing furnishings, school and IT supplies, she also takes care of buying textbooks, which are becoming increasingly electronic instead of paper.

“There is a constant evolution. Previously, for example, we bought lots of printed materials, whereas now we buy digital textbooks by purchasing licenses or memberships. Therefore, it’s important to stay aware and curious about new trends.”

She adds that there are no typical days. “Sometimes, I need to furnish an IT lab with all the necessary equipment, and then buy all of the furnishings for two primary schools opening next year. We don’t make purchases haphazardly, we need to consult people about their needs and find the right product that meets standards of quality.”

A SOURCE OF PRIDE, A PASSION

There is one thing that she is particularly proud of, and that’s the training given to administrative assistants in schools on the policy of group purchases. “It gave us the opportunity to explain the Act respecting contracting by public bodies and how to respect it.” The personnel can then transfer the information to those who want to make purchases.

Lorraine Provost reveals her passion for always finding the best solution for schools, while staying on budget. “We need to go beyond what we see on the screen. We need to get the most information, sometimes make calls for more information about products requested, and care about making the best buy,” she concludes.
INNURASSEMBLE
AN INSPIRING INITIATIVE

NICOLE DE SÈVE Collaboration

Cleverly combining theatre arts with school subjects, the InnuRassemble project breaks taboos, eliminates prejudices and builds bridges between high school students from Baie-Comeau and the Pessamit Innu community. A success story that has continued to grow since 2009.

Every year, with the support of the Centre des arts de Baie-Comeau (which created the initiative), the École secondaire Uashkaikan, the Commission scolaire de l’Estuaire and financial partners, InnuRassemble organizes a week of educational activities based on cultural references that resonate with young people.

Marie-Josée Dion, spiritual and community advisor, and Joanne Munger, pedagogical advisor, both members of the Syndicat des professionelles et professionnels de la Haute-Côte-Nord (CSQ), enthusiastically lead the initiative with partners and teachers involved.

“InnuRassemble supports pedagogical activities common to the Polyvalente des Baies and École secondaire Serge-Bouchard in Baie-Comeau, and École secondaire Uashkaikan in Pessamit. Rooted in subjects in Québec’s school curriculum, these activities allow young people to develop different cultural understandings, make connections and open themselves to another culture,” explains Johanne Munger.

Part of what makes this project unique is that is has the support and presence of artists, such as Samian and Chloé Sainte-Marie, as well as writers Biz and Bryan Perro, musicians Michel Bordeleau and Radio Radio, in addition to Innu authors, such as Jean-Louis Fontaine. As for its continuity, it’s guaranteed thanks to the ongoing commitment of educators.

Through the years, the young people have composed a song titled Parle-moi, made album covers with dream catchers, and created a French/Innu calendar with their photographs. Added to this are intercultural dinners, the creation of a play and video clip, dance and drama workshops, an annual show, and a collection of untold stories and legends published by Perro Éditeur.

“The first year, our objective was that the young people be able to get together and respect each other. This year, they collaborated to write a story - and that’s no small feat! These moments have allowed them to get to know, respect and appreciate one other,” says Johanne Munger.

And it’s not over: in 2016-2017, InnuRassemble week will be dedicated to the history and geography of the Côte-Nord, with anthropologist Serge Bouchard and musicians Florent Volland and Shauit.

Marie-Josée Dion and Johanne Munger are certain: the project promotes equal opportunity, perseverance and motivation for the young people of Baie-Comeau and Pessamit. Aware that Aboriginal Communities don’t have access to the same professional resources, they emphasize how this type of interaction allows young people to go further in their educational pursuits.

“Being a smaller school, we are targeting all levels at École Uashkaikan. Every year, the students wait with great anticipation for the return of InnuRassemble. They are anxious to participate again. They are interested in Québec culture and see that we are also interested in theirs and what they do. This has a significant impact, offering hope to these young people that equal opportunity is possible if we use all possible means,” says Marie-Josée Dion.

RECOGNITION FOR INNURASSEMBLE

RIDEAU Award (Réseau indépendant des diffuseurs d’événements artistiques unis) (2009-2010) • Essor Recognition Award, $10,000 bursary from the Ministère de l’Education and BMO Financial Group (2010-2011) • Award of Excellence from the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec (2011-2012) • Ken Spencer Award from the Canadian Education Association (2014-2015)
Discrimination against college student employees

A HUGE VICTORY FOR JUSTICE

CLAUDE GIRARD CSQ Communications Advisor

Until very recently, student employees in the college network were paid less than an employee doing the same job, with no valid justification. Today, this has become a thing of the past thanks to the negotiations of the Common Front. This type of gain would not have been possible without the conciliation agreement reached by the Fédération du personnel de soutien de l’enseignement supérieur (FPSES-CSQ), with the support of the CSQ. The agreement was the first step in putting an end to this discriminatory practice.

Let’s recall the facts: in 2007, 22 student employees, members of the Syndicat du personnel de soutien du Cégep de Sherbrooke, affiliated with the FPSES-CSQ, filed a complaint with the Pay Equity Commission (now the CNESST), in order to denounce their exclusion from the Pay Equity Act. For nearly ten years, the FPSES-CSQ increased its actions so that these students, and all student employees in Québec subjected to this type of discrimination, could obtain justice.

“As from the start, the Commission agreed that the Pay Equity Act should apply to student employees. From then on, the conciliation process began. And last December, we finally reached an agreement with the Treasury Board, correcting the situation for student employees in the college network, whose duties were either administrative, technical or animation, from activity leaders to lifeguards, between 2007 and 2015,” said Anne Dionne, president of the FPSES-CSQ.

Once the new collective agreement goes into effect, all student employees in Québec cégeps will have the right to the salary rate or first level pay scale for the class of employment in which they were hired, retroactive to December 2015.

A CALL TO ALL FORMER STUDENT EMPLOYEES

However, for this agreement to apply, the 22 signatories on the 2007 complaint against the Cégep de Sherbrooke must officially withdraw their grievance. They are therefore invited to communicate with the FPSES-CSQ as soon as possible (equite_salariale@fpses.org).

As for other students affected by this practice, regardless of their union affiliation, they are encouraged to watch for public notices that will eventually be issued in each region, explaining how to proceed to receive the lump sum payment. They must also contact the cégep they studied and worked at.

“Though the fight was long and arduous, we never gave up because it was a fight against discrimination, affecting the most vulnerable workers. This great victory not only gives justice to our members, it extends to all students concerned across Québec. I am particularly proud of that,” she says.
The little-known world of continuing college education

GABRIEL DANIS
CSQ Advisor for Higher Education

When we think of cégeps, we automatically think of pre-university or vocational programs. Yet, the college network is also an important sector for continuing education, helping thousands of people improve their skills and qualifications. Pedagogical counsellor in continuing education play a central role in the success of the students and the performance of the sector.

“Every year, cégeps offer approximately 350 Attestation of Collegial Studies (ACS), developed with partners in the labour market, that consist of short-term technical programs, full- and part-time. Contrary to Diploma of College Studies (DCS), these are specific programs, with no general education courses. There are also the Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) and Business Services. Continuing education also offers adults with a college education the chance to obtain an accelerated DCS,” says Cathia Simard, president of the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels du Cégep de Sorel-Tracy (SPPCST-CSQ).

AN PERSONALIZED PATHWAY
She explains that managing a family-work-studies balance can be difficult for adults going back to school. “Everyone has their unique story. In addition to recognizing their acquired competencies, the counsellor becomes a frontline expert for these adults, to address all of their questions or the situations they might encounter.”

“Our work therefore plays a critical role in guiding and monitoring each individual’s journey. We must also develop adapted strategies and verify, in collaboration with content specialists, the thoroughness of the training and evaluations,” continues she who is also an RCA pedagogical counsellor in continuing education.

FINANCIAL PRESSURE
Despite limited means, pedagogical advisor in continuing education must continue to recruit new students, while developing new avenues for training. “Often, these new programs require the recruitment of new teachers and trainers within very tight deadlines,” says Cathia Simard.

Many believe that surpluses in continuing education are transferred to the cégep’s consolidated funds rather than reinvested in these programs. “We’re always limited to doing more with less, which is not without consequence on the organization of training and the support available to students,” adds the union president.

INADEQUATE FUNDING
“Added to this is the fact that cégeps, as opposed to universities, must make do with limited budgets to fund continuing education, disposing of a fixed amount that is not adjusted to the demand for training,” she continues.

Given the Couillard government’s obsession with the question of adequate job training, it is difficult to understand the limited funding in this sector when the demand for continuing education greatly surpasses the offer in Québec cégeps.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IN COLLEGE IN NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults registered in an ACS</td>
<td>27,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults taking extracurricular courses</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing a DCS</td>
<td>21%</td>
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Sami Saba is a Syrian refugee who, last December, joined his wife and children who came to Québec nearly two years ago. He faces numerous obstacles in his job search, but a positive integration initiative was implemented at Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne to support him. The account of a true story that would do well imitated elsewhere!

Sami Saba has a degree in general medicine, with a specialization in medical biology, obtained while studying in both France and Syria, in addition to having managed a medical analysis laboratory in the Syrian capital of Damas. Despite this, none of his diplomas are recognized in Québec, even with the help of the Québec Ministry of Immigration. “What’s frustrating is that we receive very little explanation as to why our diplomas are refused,” he says.

ESCAPING ISOLATION

One of his friends, an IT teacher at Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne, suggested that he redirect his job search to the college network. Unfortunately, there were no positions available, and the non-recognition of his diplomas complicated things.

“The most difficult thing to get is job experience in Canada. I feel like it’s what employers look for most. Therefore, with no experience in Canada, I can’t even get an interview. It’s a vicious circle,” he continues.

Two laboratory technicians, Normand Maheu and Sylvie Demers, members of the Syndicat du personnel de soutien du Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne (CSQ), invited Sami Saba to job shadow in the laboratory. Students in the Natural Sciences and Nursing programs use the lab for chemistry classes. “Whereas Mr. Saba was only supposed to attend a few hours, he came almost every day for three weeks at the beginning of the winter semester!”, says Normand Maheu.

“When we submitted the project to the college, they were somewhat reticent, mainly for insurance purposes. We had to address the issue with the Labour Relations Committee. After accepting, the administration was very accommodating. The Human Resources department even helped Mr. Saba rewrite his CV according to Québec standards,” says Sylvie Demers.

By job shadowing he was able to escape his isolation, meet people, make contacts and improve his French. “We often forget that integrating a new society involves a bunch of little things, such as learning new cultural references and customs that can’t be learned in a book,” adds Normand Maheu.

The two college technicians remember the time fondly and encourage people to open their doors to immigrants. “We quickly developed a friendship and our interactions went beyond work. We all have something to learn from intercultural exchanges. It’s very rewarding,” explains Sylvie Demers.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Sami Saba is currently enrolled in an Attestation of Collegial Studies (ACS) in biotechnology at Cégep Ahuntsic. “At my age, it’s difficult to go back to intensive studies, especially since French is not my first language,” he confides in a very well spoken French.

With all of his knowledge and experience, we are certain that he will successfully complete his training. One thing is for sure, he will always be able to count on his two allies, Normand Maheu and Sylvie Demers, to support his integration into Québec society.
BEFORE IT’S TOO LATE

CHRISTOPHER YOUNG FIPEQ-CSQ Communications Advisor

The public childcare network has experienced its share of upheaval during the past months. Between adjusting childcare fees, major cutbacks and massive mobilization against these policies, the network has changed greatly.

It is for this reason that last April 23, the Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec (FIPEQ-CSQ) assembled a group of experts, researchers, politicians, home childcare providers, stakeholders in early childcare centres (CPE), and parents, for a conference themed “Before its too late”, hosted by actress Catherine Trudeau.

“The last few months have been significant for early childhood, as much for the public home childcare network as for CPEs. It felt important during this period of intense turmoil to take the time to listen to experts, researchers, stakeholders, and politicians, to take stock of our network. It allows us to see where we are, and especially, where we are going. This is the reason behind the theme “Before it’s too late”. To preserve the public service we have created for ourselves, we need to act fast,” says FIPEQ-CSQ vice-president, Valérie Grenon.

Attendees listened to a comprehensive presentation on the topic of the significant increase in private childcare, by Philippe Hurteau of the Institut de recherche et d’informations socio-économiques (IRIS). Thanks to funding by the liberal government, spots in private daycares have increased by 1042% since 2007! Yet, the IRIS study clearly demonstrates that services provided by public childcare centres are far superior in quality.

Other speakers also took advantage of the conference to express the importance of the public childcare network for Québec society and to deplore recent actions taken against it. Speakers included CSQ president, Louise Chabot, the parliamentary spokesperson for Québec Solidaire, Françoise David, the president of the Fédération des femmes du Québec, Mélanie Sarazin, former MNA Louise Harel, and Pierre Latendresse, professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

“We leave this meeting full of hope and drive, knowing how important it is for the children of Québec that we pursue our fight for quality public childcare services. The government’s small backward step as to increases in parental contributions for the second child constitutes an admission: in matters of early childcare, the liberal governements have improvised and penalized Québec families, as well as workers in childcare centres. Now, we need to turn the tide and prioritize the future of Québec by breathing air back into the public childcare network,” says Valérie Grenon.

Putting words into action, the conference ended with a funeral march through the streets of Montréal. Under signs grieving the early childcare network, participants placed fake coffins in front of the Ministère du Revenu building.
CSQ, PROUD PARTNER OF THE FONDS DE SOLIDARITÉ FTQ.

For more information on the protocol CSQ-Fonds, contact the local representative (LR) in your workplace, your local union or Langis Beaulieu, coordinator – CSQ at 1 800 361-5017.