

NEGO Special Edition

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From Faye's Desk

Leggo My Nego!

You're going to be hearing from us more frequently in the coming months as we keep you updated on the negotiations. While the government's salary offer has hit the headlines in the media, I urge you to keep on reading. The current salary offer means a loss in your purchasing power in the next five years. Meanwhile, our employer would like to increase your workload by reducing chair release and forcing you to assume some of these duties on top of your regular

teaching load. There is a full frontal assault on our non-permanents by proposing the removal of hiring priority for the first three years for day division teachers and by eliminating it completely for continuing education teachers. And while we asked for easier access to permanence (tenure), the government would like to delay tenure to our female colleagues who have taken maternity leaves.

Mobilization is Needed More Now than Ever

This overview of the government's and the *Comité patronal de négociation des collègues'* (CPNC) negotiation priorities leads us to believe that mobilization by our members will be necessary. In order to achieve the shared goal of coming to a negotiated settlement by March 31 (or even by the end of this semester), we need to show our employers that we reject their offers and we support our demands. Keep those scarves ready for action!

FNEEQ Delegates Reject Both the Government's Central and Sectoral Table Offers

An Update from the Central Table (salaries, pensions, parental rights)

1. Money talks

On November 30, the government offered a 7% increase in "labor costs" (i.e. not just general salary increases, but any sectoral or pay equity adjustments, etc.) over 5 years. On January 14, a more precise offer for pay increases was deposited:

April 1 st 2010	0.5 %
April 1 st 2011	0.75 %
April 1 st 2012	1.0 %
April 1 st 2013	1.25 %
April 1 st 2014	1.5%
Total over 5 years	5 %

There is also a possible further increase of up to a maximum of 0.75% in years 2013 & 2014, provided the growth of Quebec's *Gross Domestic Product* is greater than 4.2% **every year** from 2010 to 2014. However, its growth has exceeded 4.2% only 6 times since 1982 and never since 2000!

The government is proposing to further reduce the purchasing power of its workers as we see by comparing their offer to Caisse Desjardins' projected inflation rates:

Year	Projected Inflation	Pay Increase Offered	Yearly Loss of Purchasing Power
2010	1.7 %	0.5 %	- 1.2 %
2011	2.1 %	0.75 %	- 1.35 %
2012	2.5 %	1.0 %	- 1.5 %
2013	2.3 %	1.25 %	- 1.05 %
2014	-----	1.5%	-----

This is why our FNEEQ delegates rejected this offer!

Our central table salary demands ask for a 2% increase every year for three years for inflation protection and for a catch-up increase of 1.75 % of the average income every year (remember our recent 0% decree-imposed increases?). Also, if growth in the *Gross Domestic Product* is greater than 3.75%, we want to share in this increase of our collective wealth.

2. Retirement

The government seems to share our goal of stabilizing the contributions while assuring the RREGOP retirement plan is viable in the long run, but the details are still being discussed. The government has offered to raise the ceiling on years of contribution, which would help keep some of its labour force working for a few more years, as the worker earns higher retirement benefits. They want

to raise the ceiling from 35 years to 38 years (our demand was to eliminate the ceiling completely). Negotiations also continue on reducing the lower limit of earnings that pension premiums are paid on from 35% to 25% to restore the balance between lower- and higher-paid employees. The government is favourable, but wants the costs to be paid by savings in the plan, not by them.



The other government priorities include:

- a. Updating the table of costs to buy back retirement benefits of unpaid leaves, if done more than six months after the end of the leave;
- b. Ending the possible acquisition of pension credits for buying back years of service predating the creation of RREGOP in 1973;
- c. Removing the bank of 90 days credited to workers which compensates for “unforeseeable events,” but in reality usually gets added on at the time of retirement, allowing employees to retire some three months before the deadline;
- d. Limiting access to early retirement without penalty after 35 years of service to those over 55 years of age, and increasing the penalty for early retirement for those under 60 with less than 35 years of service.

3. Parental Rights

The government and the unions have agreed to set up a parity working group to report back by the end of February on how to bring our collective agreements up to date with the current legal framework on parental rights. For example, the differences in the length of leaves for natural and adoptive fathers was recently called into question in arbitration.

An Update from the Sectoral Table (Workload, Job Security)

1. No Additional Resources

At the sectoral table, the *Comité patronal de négociation des collèges* (CPNC) representing our employers has offered no new money for cegep teaching. However, if we agree to cut teaching costs, the money saved can be used to solve various problems.

2. Fewer Chairs, More “Accountability”

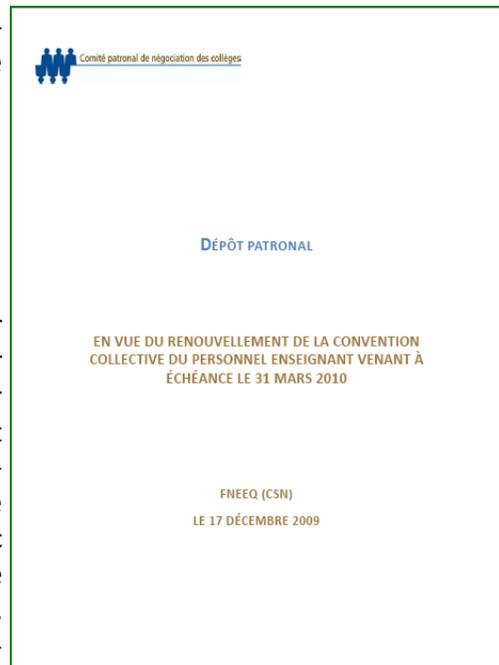
While FNEEQ’s demands include more chair release, our employer’s priority is to reduce the resources allocated for department and program coordination (so far this is their only proposal for “savings”)!!! At the same time, they want to increase each teacher’s “accountability” for participation in tasks such as the development of programs and the accomplishment of institutional priorities in the strategic plan. Teachers will have to demonstrate that they have fulfilled these responsibilities. This is a workload increase, as much of this is presently a shared departmental responsibility or done by those with release time (e.g. chairs or those with program release).

But worse, by decreasing the chair release (at one hypothetical college from 27 to 7 full-time teacher equivalents!), the fewer chairs left would become a kind of sub-Dean with truckloads of responsibilities and added tasks. Imagine your chair being responsible for four more departments!

3. Hiring in Continuing Education

The *Comité patronal de négociation des collèges* (CPNC) proposes to eliminate hiring priority for Continuing Education teachers, so that an available teaching load is given to the most “competent” teacher. Who will decide who is the most competent and how they will decide is not specified.

They also want to change the rules regarding double employment. This probably means to eliminate them in most cases. The result would be more regular teachers teaching in AECs and in Continuing Education. It would also mean more outside full-time employed persons taking part-time jobs in Continuing Education.



4. Hiring

The CPNC wants to add a new criterion of “*interpersonal abilities*” when hiring new teachers as collective work is very important in teaching. The two current criteria are “*professional competence*” and “*pedagogical aptitude*”.

They also want to eliminate any hiring priority for non-permanent teachers during the first three years of their employment – a long “probationary” period--AND change the criteria in hiring priorities for non-permanent teachers so that status (full-time, part-time, etc.) is not considered, only seniority.

5. No Way Out

Finally, the CPNC wants to make leaves less available. This is a demand that was also presented at the professionals’ sectoral table, meaning they probably are quite keen on pushing for this one.

6. No Response to Our Most Important Demands

The CPNC priorities make no response to or even mention of our principal demands, which can be grouped under the themes of

- a reasonable workload,
- more job security and
- a fair wage.

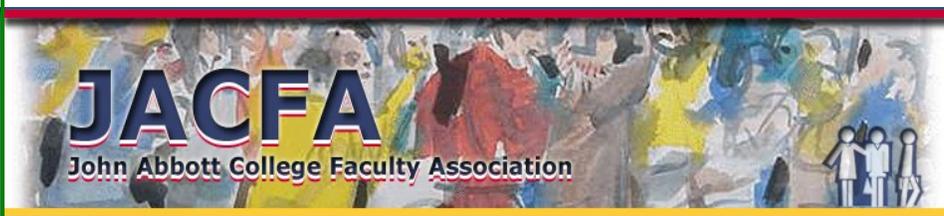
First, the CPNC has passed all issues related to our salaries – including our demands regarding the family-work balance – to the central table. Moreover, the CPNC does not appear to have much interest in improving access to permanence. Finally, although the employer “aims to provide support to teachers faced with such situations as programs with small enrolment, development of continuing education and adapting educational services to an increasingly diverse student population,” no details were provided about the nature or level of this support.

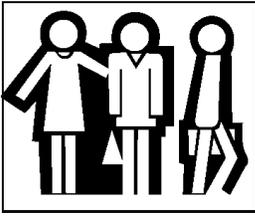
We might add that at no point in the employer’s document are issues raised about the possibility of modifying the CI parameters to reduce workloads for those with multiple preparations or large numbers of students to teach, evaluate and support.

To Stay Informed:

On the [JACFA website](#): frequent *InfoNego* reports from both the CSN (central table) and FNEEQ (sectoral table), pictures, and more!

Les Zapartistes, a hilarious franco-phone group of socially involved comedians, have weekly clips on the CSN’s [secteur public](#) website.





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Links:

Click here for [central](#) and [sectoral](#) table offers from our employers.

Click here for our [central](#) and [sectoral](#) table demands.

Click here for the [CSN secteur public](#) website

Click here for the JACFA website [Negotiations page](#)

We're on the web:
www.johnabbott.qc.ca/jacfa

Upcoming events:

- **On February 12**, members of Common Front unions (including John Abbott) will be handing out bookmarks;
- A syndical celebration of the Chinese New Year of the Tiger will take place in the **week of February 14**;
- Union reps from across the Common Front will demonstrate in Québec City on **February 22**;
- **Between February 22 and March 10**, have fun with the solidarity quiz "*Quelques arpents de solidarité*" (Solidarity Trivial Pursuit).

**Big Common Front Rally on
Saturday March 20
in Montréal!
Stay tuned for more details.**