

Nego Bulletin

JACFA joins Anti-Austerity March in Montreal on October 31.

Negotiation Demands are formally submitted

In a carnivalesque atmosphere, energized by the sound of drumbeats, John Abbott teachers joined an estimated 40 000 protesters last Friday, in a march against Quebec government's proposed "Austerity" program. Under the theme of "Austerity, a Horror Story", protesters donning festive costumes hailed from organizations representing post-secondary students—85 000 of whom were on a one-day strike, firefighters, healthcare workers, anti-poverty activists, other public service workers, and of course teachers.

The "Austerity" measures seek to cut billions of dollars from social programs, while raising hidden taxes through the increase of fees for electricity, government services and daycare. At the same time, they do not ask corporations to pay their fair share of fiscal contribution, which has decreased from 60% of total government revenues in 1961, to just 25% today.

The "Austerity" measures are of particular concern to us, CEGEP teachers, because they would have a direct impact on our ability to arrive at a fair settlement in our negotiations of the next collective agreement. But they would also affect us as citizens who would see our public services—health care, education, and child care, further reduced, and the "fees" we pay increased. "Austerity" is but another pretext for our government to once again transfer the cost of social well-being—health and education—away from those who can and should be paying more. In the coming weeks, we will be sending you various *Bulletins* that will further be debunking this notion of "Austerity".

The march coincided with the formal deposit of our negotiation demands with the government, both sectorial and Central Table ones. The government is expected to respond by December 31, 2014.

The next Anti-Austerity march is scheduled for Saturday November 29th. JACFA will once again be organizing a contingent of teachers. As we head into a negotiation and mobilization year, we are hoping that more and more teachers will be joining us on these monthly marches as a way of ramping up our solidarity. So mark your calendars.