



**SECTORAL AND LOCAL DEMANDS FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE
COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

PRESENTED BY

**THE FÉDÉRATION DU PERSONNEL PROFESSIONNEL DES COLLÈGES
(FPPC-CSQ)**

TO THE

COMITÉ PATRONAL DE NÉGOCIATION DES COLLÈGES (CPNC)

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Note: Should there be any discrepancy, the demands delivered in person to the Comité patronal de négociation shall take precedence.

Preamble

In recent years, developments in college research, the ever-increasing special needs of the student body and numerous technological, legislative and administrative changes have led to adjustments in the professional services on offer and, consequently, greater demand for professional expertise and further specialization. As key players in the higher education sector, colleges can't ignore social, economic and cultural transformations. Now more than ever, they need the expertise of their professional staff to deal with these changes.

But the college network has to contend with quite a challenge nowadays: labour shortages. Colleges, as employers, must take a leadership role and set themselves apart to attract the professional workers needed to further Québec's economic development and ensure the smooth running of their institutions. They also need to offer modern and competitive working conditions which will allow their professional staff to have their say in the decision-making process of their activity sector and select appropriate interventions to achieve the desired objectives.

Inescapably, these working conditions involve the recognition of their skills and autonomy, the possibility of taking on various challenges, a flexibility which allows for rewarding work-personal-life balance and the necessity of a competitive overall compensation.

During the latest bargaining rounds, some headway was made toward better recognition of the work carried out by the professional staff but there is still a long way to go to make working conditions more attractive. Recognizing the expertise and value of college professionals is crucial. They must also be allowed to play their role with the autonomy that it entails, as it increases work motivation and fosters greater productivity.

Through the six objectives outlined in this document, the Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges (FPPC-CSQ) wants to demonstrate how work organization can be improved to help colleges become employers with competitive working conditions which would allow them to continue to play an active role in the development of Québec's society.

Intersectoral demands

FPPC-CSQ intersectoral demands—salary, pension plan, regional disparities and parental rights—and other Common front demands will be tabled at the central table where discussions will also be held.

Local and sectoral demands

Local and sectoral FPPC-CSQ demands are grouped under the following objectives:

- Objective 1: Regular updating of the Classification plan to reflect the realities experienced on the ground
- Objective 2: Acknowledge and promote professional recognition and autonomy
- Objective 3: Improve paid leaves
- Objective 4: Better remuneration for professional personnel
- Objective 5: Facilitate conditions for national and local union activities
- Objective 6: Prioritize skill development of professional personnel
- Clarifications / corrections to the collective agreement

Objective 1: Regular updating of the Classification plan to reflect the realities experienced on the ground

The world of work is experiencing tremendous transformation, where qualifying training abound to meet the diverse needs of the labour market. Professional jobs are more specific and varied than ever before; classifying them based on the existing Classification plan employment categories has become quite the challenge. As such, some professionals are classified in an employment category that does not reflect the tasks and responsibilities that are entrusted to them, leading to difficulties for them as well as the management team, not to mention ensuing recruitment issues. It would be far easier for colleges to recruit new personnel if job descriptions truly reflected the jobs at hand.

The obsolescence of the Classification plan also results in challenges in terms of retaining college professional personnel. More precisely, the lack of a regular job characteristic analysis results in these duties having lesser value, creating a misunderstanding of the actual value of the work of the college professional personnel.

Each professional employment category has its own expertise, which is why it is important to choose the right person to address the right need. Recognition of the work that is actually carried out by the professional staff will result in a greater sense of belonging to one's work environment. To this end, the FPPC-CSQ considers it obvious to work with the negotiating employer to establish the means to make the necessary changes to the Classification plan so it is regularly updated.

To do so, the FPPC-CSQ calls for:

- A. A review of the provisions of article 6-2.00 (Classification Plan) of the collective agreement to introduce a joint classification committee setting out its mandate (review existing employment categories, add new employment categories and conduct the evaluation), composition, operating methods as well as a list of specialized arbitrators to be appointed in the event of disagreement as well as their mandate.

Objective 2: Acknowledge and promote professional recognition and autonomy

The world of work is constantly changing and colleges are following suit. In recent years, highly qualified professionals, who are central to college network operations, have seen their tasks and responsibilities increase, change and even become increasingly complex while their working conditions and means of actions are at a standstill. The professional personnel has to deal with new challenges and, given employee turnover and staffing shortages, must constantly innovate to reach their targets. Professionals are looking for more than just a salary; they want a compensation that involves more than money. They want to be valued and see their expertise properly recognized. This recognition must necessarily involve an innovative and stimulating work environment where creativity, flexibility, autonomy and expertise are front and centre. This is essential to the retention of existing college professionals and to attract a new generation to take up the torch.

To reach this objective, the FPPC-CSQ calls for the following:

- A. Include provisions enshrining in the collective agreement the role of professional personnel on institutional and educational committees as well as the importance of their participation.
- B. Amend article 5-15.00 of the collective agreement to prevent any position set out in the Classification Plan for college professionals from being performed by a person who is not a member of the certification unit.
- C. Introduce the notion of teleworking in the collective agreement and see that it provides for boundaries as to its access, terms and organization to facilitate working from home.
- D. Foster job retention of experienced professionals by providing for and implementing attractive retention measures.
- E. Include in the collective agreement the 2.5 million dollars provided in budget regulations to hire professionals and increase this amount to allow for the funding of projects initiated by the aforementioned to support the school success of the student population with disabilities or special needs.
- F. Introduce in the collective agreement leave conditions for professionals who have received research funding.
- G. Add a personalized work schedule where professionals determine themselves the time their workday begins and ends, in compliance with the rules set out by the College.
- H. Provide additional professional resources to address the work generated by the *Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec* (Bill 96).

Objective 3: Improve paid leaves

Everyone knows that holidays and time off do a world of good! More and more studies have shown the benefits of a greater number of annual vacation and leaves for employees and the organizations that hire them. In fact, it is increasingly acknowledged that time off leads to increased productivity, better employee morale, greater commitment, better retention as well as significant health benefits, all of which are worthy aims for colleges.

In 2022, a competitive paid-leave offer is among the labour market's more sought-after benefits. However, for the college network's professional personnel, the quantum of annual vacation as well as the number of days for sick and personal leaves have not been reviewed for decades. These working conditions are clearly inadequate, and contribute to the lack of interest from professionals who could have considered pursuing a career in our network. Reconciling the number of leave days with the need for time off to allow for a better work-personal-life balance is essential. Modern working conditions that are up-to-date with today's realities would help attract and retain qualified personnel.

In this regard, the FPPC-CSQ calls for the following:

- A. Increase paid leaves, notably by improving existing banks and creating new banks.
- B. Afford the opportunity for interested professionals to carry forward 35 hours of vacation no later than August 15 of the following year without prior authorization.
- C. For the purposes of calculating annual vacation, expand clause 8-4.08 so that it includes the school network as well as the health and social services network.
- D. Improve gradual retirement, notably by:
 - the maximum duration of gradual retirements provided under the *Act respecting the Government and Public Employees Retirement Plan* (RREGOP) from five (5) years to seven (7) years;
 - for the opportunity, for a professional person taking advantage of the gradual retirement program, to prolong it beyond the agreed duration without exceeding the maximum period provided by this program;
 - improving access conditions.
- E. Grant professionals victim of domestic violence with the special leave included in clause 8-5.01 h) by seeing that it provides for at least five (5) days of paid leave.

Objective 4: Better remuneration for professional personnel

Salary is certainly important, but there's more to it! To attract and retain increasingly scarce workers, a competitive and more wide-ranging compensation is crucial. Professional services must receive proper remuneration, one that reflects the required responsibilities and expertise. Offering an overall compensation that truly recognizes the value and importance of the role professionals play in carrying out a college's mission is essential.

To reach this objective, the FPPC-CSQ calls for the following:

- A. Ensure monetary compensation for any mandatory qualification beyond the university degree that is required by the College toward the performance of a job.
- B. Significantly increase employer contributions toward group insurance plans.
- C. Ensure that college network psychologists have similar remuneration packages to those in the health and social services network, notably by granting them an attraction-retention premium.
- D. Reevaluate certain employment categories using the mechanisms available during negotiations.

Objective 5: Facilitate conditions for national and local union activities

A good working relationship improves everyone's job satisfaction. Accordingly, it is essential to have a space where we can bring problems forward, listen to one another and work out appropriate solutions. The Labour Relations Committee (CRT) is the appropriate decision-making body to hold these discussions. Expanding its role and use would be beneficial to all concerned. Certain colleges are already actively working with their professional staff's local union because they have seen the positive impact of this type of collaboration and shared search for solutions. One of the roles of a local union is to stay close to its members to see what occurs in their daily lives. There is no better spokesperson to discuss matters with the management and administrators on behalf of these professionals, or to take part in selection committees and other bodies that ensure that the College runs smoothly.

However, winning conditions must be put in place to ensure optimum labour relations. Dealing with an already tight schedule due to their assigned tasks and their union involvement, union representatives can't devote the necessary time to properly represent the professional personnel. These time constraints can lead to problems dragging out, to less time allotted to finding solutions and to being reactive rather than proactive.

As such, the FPPC-CSQ believes that it is necessary to improve conditions governing union activities to ensure a better collaboration between colleges and local unions so as to provide a work environment where the professional staff feels it is being heard, respected and involved in the decisions that affect them.

To reach this objective, the FPPC-CSQ calls for the following:

- A. Improve leave to address union business during working hours, notably by providing for statutory union leave proportional to the number of professionals working for the College, without loss of pay or reimbursement by the Union.
- B. Provide for leave to prepare meetings of the committees set out in the collective agreement.
- C. Review all provisions of article 4-2.00, namely by adding subjects to be discussed by the Labour Relations Committee and by limiting and regulating its modalities and procedures.
- D. Ensure a genuine consultation process through a survey of the Union before the College staffing plan is tabled and by changing the cut-off tabling date to May 15.
- E. Review the composition, mandate and process provided for in clause 5-3.10 concerning the selection committee.
- F. Facilitate the integration of newly hired professionals, notably by introducing a welcome process and regulating evaluation measures.

Objective 6: Prioritize skill development of professional personnel

Professional development has been a long-standing and integral part of the lives of many professionals. In fact, professional development is not an option for them: it is essential that they stay up to date in an ever-changing environment. Not only are there increasingly broad and specific development needs depending on the employment category, there is also the ever-changing challenge of digital skills proficiency in higher education. The professional development budget of colleges can no longer meet the diverse training needs of their professional staff. Not only have amounts allocated not been reviewed for many years, they completely disregard the growing requirements of professional orders, the increase of registration fees as well as higher travel and accommodation costs for staff members who live far from urban centres. To maintain their expertise and develop new skills required to meet the many challenges in higher education, professional staff members must not only have access to significantly higher sums but also have their say on college professional development budgets being allocated as fairly and equitably as possible.

Here is what the FPPC-CSQ is calling for to make that happen:

- A. Increase substantially and index both the allowance and the decentralized amount for professional development (articles 7-1.00 and 7-2.00) and grant decision-making powers to a joint professional development committee, particularly regarding the use and distribution of allocated amounts.

Clarifications / corrections to the collective agreement

- A. Introduce in the collective agreement clauses ensuring professionals the freedom to speak out, the right to comment and express themselves in good faith, for the common good, public interest or general interest, without being subject to reprisals, while respecting the rights protected by the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.
- B. Provide for a time limit to send the English version of the collective agreement.
- C. Provide for a time limit to pay the additional remuneration once the employer has been notified.
- D. Stipulate that the additional remuneration is paid on the received salary rather than the rate provided for in the salary scale.
- E. Clarify at 1-1.30 that at the end of 90 working days, professionals that remain in their position are deemed to be temporary project leader professionals.
- F. Withdraw the notion of 50 km for medical expenses (8-11.35).
- G. Clarify, in the original French version, the term “affectation provisoire” provided at 4-2.06 i) and 8-6.18 with respect to “assignation provisoire” (translated as “interim assignment” and “provisional assignment” respectively in the English version).
- H. Correct the inconsistency between articles 5-3.06 and 5-3.11.
- I. Clarify clause 5-13.09 to ensure that said article is used only when necessary due to the gravity and nature of the acts, notably by informing the professional employee of the reasons for their suspension.
- J. Introduce into the collective agreement the recognition that domestic violence is a wrongful act and ensure that the College put in place an information, awareness and protection program.
- K. Harmonize Appendix “E” of the collective agreement regarding regional disparities to allow all unions affiliated with the FPPC-CSQ at the time of the collective agreement’s signature and subject to this appendix to benefit from all relevant sector-specific negotiated rights and privileges.
- L. Ensure that when a person from another certification unit is declared covered by the Union’s certificate of accreditation, whether due to a TAT decision or by agreement between the parties, said person transfers their sick day banks and retains their tenure.

NOTE:

The provisions related to any subject that has not been addressed in this document's demands must be renewed by making, if applicable, the necessary updates, adjustments and concordances.

The same applies to appendices and letters of agreement unless otherwise stated by the union party during negotiations.

During negotiations, the union party reserves the right to alter, add or retract portions of these demands, notably to harmonize them with demands related to intersectoral matters and other demands made by the CSQ and/or Common front. The same applies if, during current negotiations, new certification units were to join the FPPC-CSQ.

The union party asks that the employer party commit to automatically granting the gains or greater benefits with monetary impact which could be granted to other collective agreements in the education, college and healthcare networks.

END-OF-NEGOTIATION PROTOCOL

As part of the prospective agreement, the parties agree to an end-of-negotiation protocol.