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RTU-SER Newsletter

• NEGOTIATIONS 2010

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On February 12, some 40 QPAT delegates (including Sylvia Hancheruk-Dawson, Steven LeSueur and myself) demonstrated outside the MELS offices 600 Fullum in Montreal and submitted 2,000 *Snapshot of a teacher's reality* questionnaires filled out by teachers in Quebec's nine English-speaking unions (300 of those from RTU!). Despite the wind and the cold, the atmosphere was warm and helped to get negotiations off to a strong start. Support materials are being sent to schools by QPAT throughout the month of March. The scarves are already in schools. On their way to schools are flags, post-it notes and window stickers – all to be used by teachers to inform and sensitize the milieu that we are in a negotiations process.

A GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS CALLED FOR MARCH 17th TO VOTE ON PHASE 3 OF THE QPAT ACTION PLAN, WHICH IS TO EXTEND RECESS BY 10 MINUTES EVERY WEDNESDAY IN APRIL. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND !

A MAJOR COMMON FRONT DEMONSTRATION IS PLANNED FOR SATURDAY, MARCH 20, IN DOWNTOWN MONTREAL; WE WILL BE CHARTERING BUSES FOR THE EVENT. STAY TUNED

• CLASSROOM REALITY

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More than 15,000 Quebec teachers answered the survey, enabling the CSQ to draw the following portrait of the situation:

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- About 68% of integrated students do not receive adequate services;
- 83% of classes contain over 10% students with special needs;
- 68% of classes were formed without regard to balanced composition;
- 50% of teachers have worked for more than five years in a position without job security;
- Over 35% of respondents say their teaching situation has no job security;
- 94% believe that class sizes must be reduced in order to ensure student success.

• URGENT PETITION TO THE GOVERNMENT

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The QPAT is currently circulating a petition denouncing the Liberal government's amendment of the Basic School Regulations to enable the application of certain employer demands. Such underhanded methods remove all credibility from ongoing negotiations, since they are based on the assumption that the demands will be accepted.

• FRAMEWORK

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Further to the resolution that was unanimously adopted in January, a meeting with School Board senior management was held on February 15, According to Director-General Stephen Lessard, the June 2010 deadline can be extended, if necessary. We suggest that a motion is voted and approved at School Council requesting exactly that.

• **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

• **PROGRESSIVE RETIREMENT**

• **SURPLUS TEACHERS**

• **WHAT ABOUT SICK DAYS?**

• **IMPORTANT REMINDER: 2010 - 2011 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

• **NEW WEBSITE**

SCHOOL COUNCIL

School administrators must **consult their School Council (by March 7)** on their need for **teaching staff** for the following school year.

PROGRESSIVE RETIREMENT

The April 1 deadline to submit applications for progressive retirement is fast approaching.

SURPLUS TEACHERS

The annual "spring dance" is set to start soon: the School Board will determine the number of surplus teachers, as applicable. The important dates are the following:

- By April 30 each year, the school administration determines its needs in terms of teaching staff; if there are surplus teachers, the administration attempts to reassign them within the school, according to seniority, category and subcategory. Further to this process, any remaining surplus teachers are notified, in writing, that they are subject to a mandatory transfer to another school. In each school, the School Board posts the list of vacant positions in its other schools. Over the next five working days, the surplus teachers inform the administration, in writing, of their choice, based on the list, using the form provided in Schedule F (5-21.16a), available at the schools.
- By May 18, the School Board assigns the surplus teachers to the available positions, according to seniority and category.
- By June 1, the School Board provides written notice to the teachers who have been transferred to other schools.

WHAT ABOUT SICK DAYS?

There are often questions about the various three sick day banks, as follows:

- **NON-MONNEYABLE SICK DAYS:** This bank consists of six days that teachers receive on hiring. These days are not cash-convertible but can be used for the first five days of a sick leave.
- **MONNEYABLE SICK DAYS:** These days were accumulated prior to 1996 and can be used to ensure income for the first five days of a sick leave. If unused, they will be paid out upon the teacher's departure from the School Board (resignation, retirement, etc.).
- **TEACHERS' SICK LEAVE CREDIT:** This credit consists of the six sick days that teachers receive at the beginning of the school year and that can be used to ensure income for the first five days of a sick leave. Any unused days will be added to the teacher's sick day bank and will be paid out upon the teacher's departure from the School Board.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: 2010 - 2011 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Consultations regarding next year's school calendar have been **ongoing since February 17**. Note that two significant changes are being recommended:

1. That the end date of third term be moved to late February;
2. For high schools, that a formal report (report card) be replaced by an **informal report**. The purpose of the latter is to inform parents of their child's progress and can take the form of a parent-teacher meeting, student assignments with teacher comments or any other form of communication between the school and the student's family.

The consultation ends April 6th, 2010

Michel Gagnon
President



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