



THE CSQ ANNOUNCES IT'S LOOKING FOR A STRIKE MANDATE

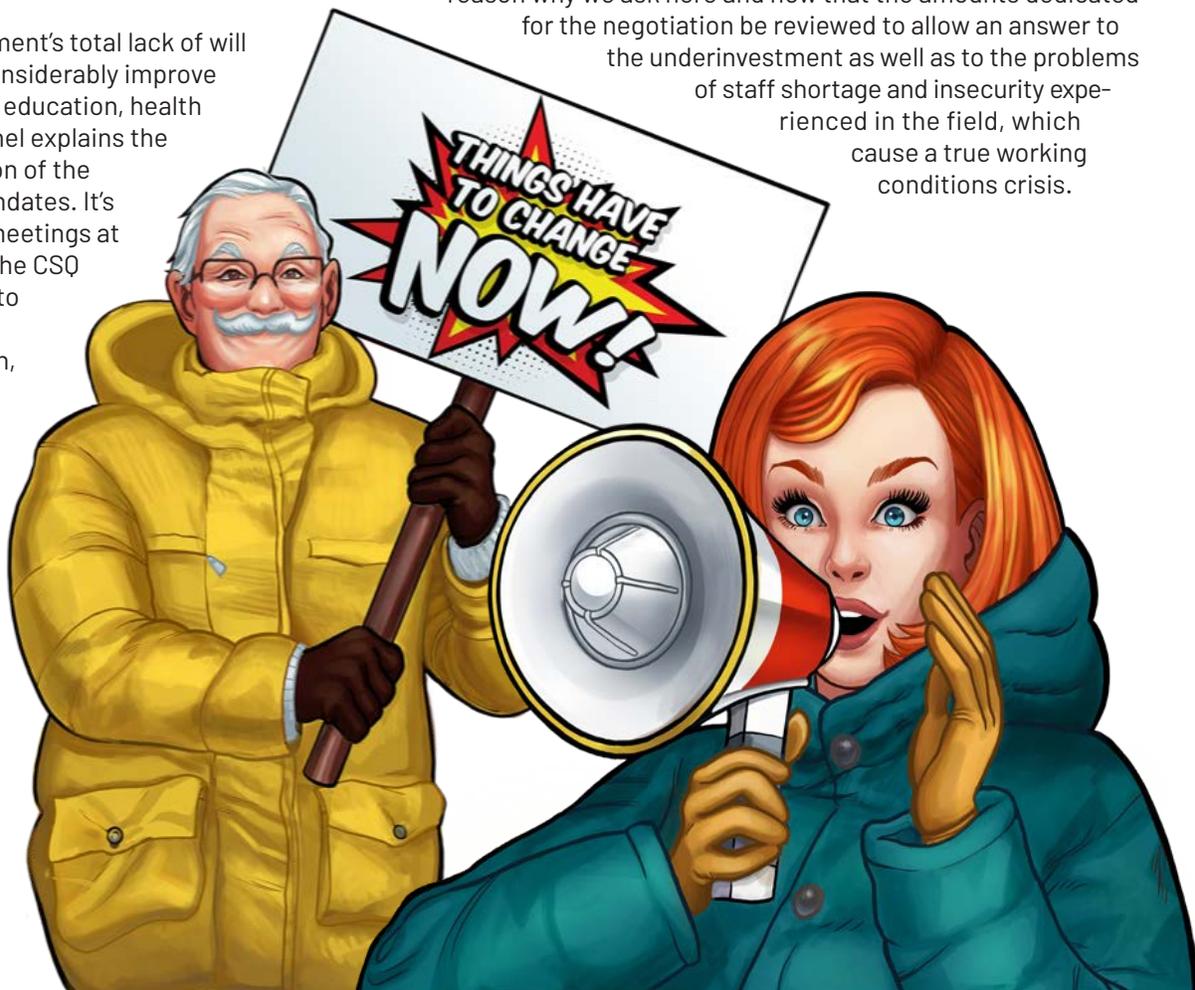
Coming out of the General negotiation council (CGN), held on December 2 and 3, and in light of the stalemate of the public sector negotiations it has been denouncing for many months, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) announces that the members meeting in the proceedings voted in favour of looking for a strike mandate if the government's financial framework doesn't evolve in a significant way in the coming weeks.

The François Legault government's total lack of will to submit offers that could considerably improve the working conditions of the education, health and higher education personnel explains the onset of a general consultation of the members to obtain strike mandates. It's clear: following a few dozen meetings at our negotiation tables, after the CSQ revised its demands last May to take into consideration the health and economic situation, the government still refuses to review its financial framework to give the necessary push to slow the bleeding we are seeing in our public services.

If nothing changes in the coming weeks at the negotiation tables, the 125,000 employees of the public and parapublic sectors represented by the CSQ will be called to vote on strike mandates which could go up to an equivalent of 5 days. The result of those consultations will be communicated at the end of the process, which will happen over a few weeks.

Things have to change now!

The lack of a significant answer from the Treasury Board to the numerous structural problems of the networks adds insult to injury within the context of the current negotiation. It's the reason why we ask here and now that the amounts dedicated for the negotiation be reviewed to allow an answer to the underinvestment as well as to the problems of staff shortage and insecurity experienced in the field, which cause a true working conditions crisis.



We must note the impatience of the CSQ members, who express having had enough of not being taken seriously in this negotiation and are calling for concrete solutions immediately. For years now, workers in schools, centres, health institutions and CÉGEPs have been confronted with an underinvestment that keeps them in a difficult situation.

Again, this past week, the Institut de la statistique du Québec confirmed that the global remuneration of the Québec state employees is lagging behind that of other Québec workers by 9.2%. That includes the salary, the pension plan and other social benefits like paid vacation, holidays, sick leave, etc. As for teaching staff in primary and secondary schools, the only group of employees officially compared by Statistics Canada, it remains the lowest paid of all the Canadian provinces.

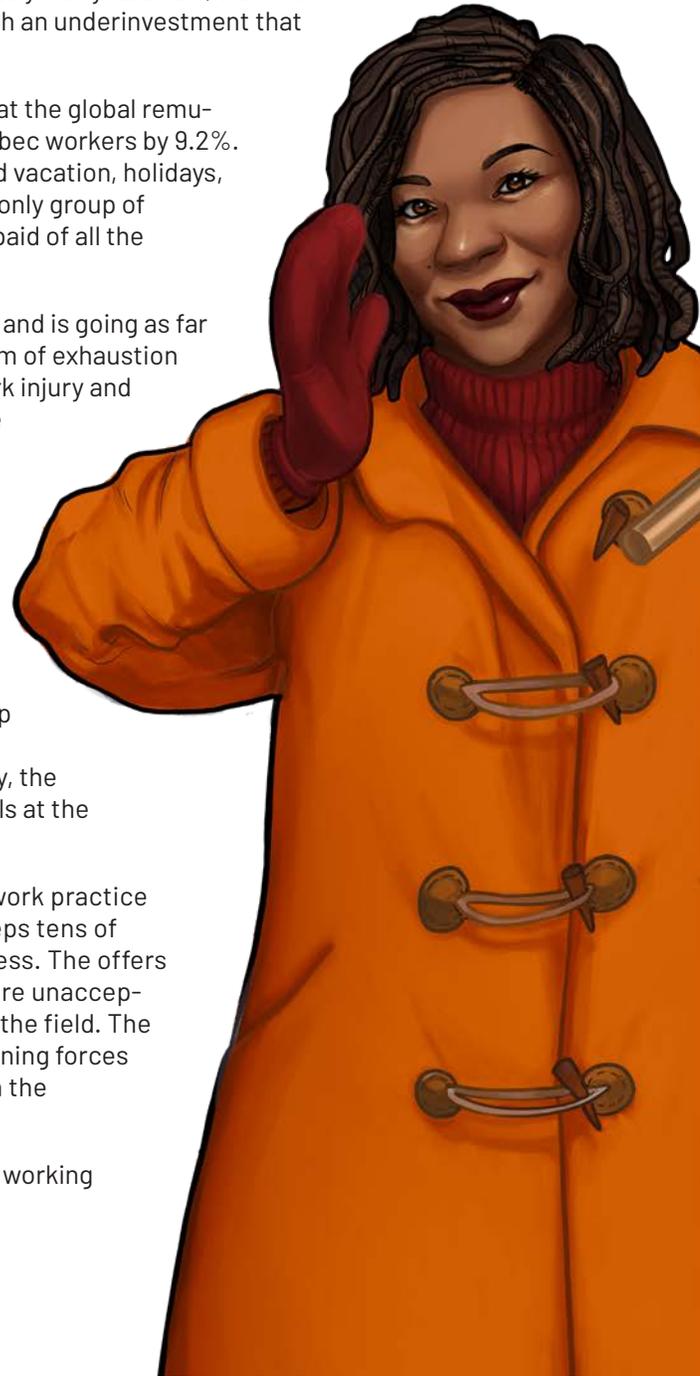
For too long, the staff shortage has been heavily felt in the public networks and is going as far as to compromise services to the public. This leads to a generalized problem of exhaustion and work overload, thus creating a vicious circle. Growing absences for work injury and illness, as well as labour attraction and retention issues, make it so that the situation is now unbearable. More than ever, the problems are glaring and structural and deserve serious solutions. This true working conditions crisis and the government's intransigence force us to announce today that we are looking for another way to try and unblock the negotiation. The message is clear and we won't waver: things have to change now!

The ball in the government's court

The CSQ also calls on the Legault government about the importance to keep its promises aiming to make education, health and higher education its priorities. Unless the governmental offers are improved in a meaningful way, the facts confirm that the CAQ's commitments never materialized into proposals at the negotiation tables.

By not allowing any offer which could concretely improve the working or work practice conditions, the government not only reneges on its commitments but keeps tens of thousands of female-predominant jobs in a position of great precariousness. The offers that the employer has persisted on maintaining since the month of April are unacceptable and have the effect of postponing the problems experienced daily in the field. The total closed-mindedness expressed by the Treasury Board since the beginning forces the CSQ members to a broad recognition of a stalemate. The ball is now in the government's court.

For more information about the essential nature of the reinvestment in our working conditions to foster a fair economic recovery, and preserve the quality and accessibility of our public services: lequebecalesmoyens.lacsq.org.



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