carnets 50

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fneeq CSN
Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec


PHOTO : DOMINIC MORISSETTE

Benoît Lacoursière



Bring on the education summit!

"The education reform we are undertaking must contribute to the emergence of a more just, more democratic and more egalitarian society"

– Excerpt from the report of the Estates General (October 1996).

Québec's education system is a far cry from the vision articulated during the 1995-1996 Estates General on Education. Schools are decrepit, access is compromised and inequalities are widening dramatically. The objectives set in 1995 have been betrayed in favour of a neoliberal, managerial, clientelist vision of schools and higher education.

We hope the process announced by the new Parti Québécois government will be genuine and, like the consultation launched in 1995 by Jean Garon, will be a real consultation. This consultation must be collegial and decentralized. It must draw on both lived experience and scientific expertise. That is the approach that led to a reframing of our conception of education, from early childhood through university, in the mid-1990s. Every cog in Québec's education system must be examined, with no stone left unturned. Most importantly, the government must honour its side of the social contract and provide sufficient, predictable resources.

All components of the FNEEQ will contribute to this effort. Our input will reflect our goals: it will be collegial, democratic and grounded in experience and science. Our elementary and secondary school teachers—in private schools, in special education schools, at schools in Indigenous communities—will be able to share their practices and voice their needs. So will our members at the CEGEPs and universities. There, the hot topics of discussion will include the impact of AI, job insecurity and academic freedom.

The FNEEQ has been working on this for over a year through the Grand Rendez-vous de l'éducation. Regional assemblies have been held, and on December 4-5, 2026, we will gather in Québec City for a collective discussion. These conversations will help shape our contribution to the future Estates General and equip all of our affiliated unions and members to participate in the process.

This issue of Carnets features testimonials from members about the challenges in our schools and potential solutions. Enjoy the read!

Solidarity!



Across Québec, the community of 16 universities mobilized as never before. The demands included enhanced, stable public funding for universities.

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FNEEQ–CSN
1601, avenue De Lorimier
Montréal, (QC) H2K 4M5

Telephone : 514 598-2241 / 1 877 312-2241
fneeq.reception@csn.qc.ca
www.fneeq.qc.ca

Coordination
Martin Robert

Contributors
Nova Doyon, Christine Gauthier, Saleha Hedaraly, Benoît Lacoursière, Hélène Nazon, Yves de Repentigny et Martin Robert.

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Martin Robert et Marie-Pier Dalpé

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Following the FNEEQ's Grand Rendez-vous de l'éducation, Carnets has once again gathered the viewpoints and reflections of educators in the schools and post-secondary institutions. What is their vision of the profession? What are the challenges? Whether they are teaching young children or adults, their perspectives often echo one another.

Interviews and articles : Martin Robert

Precariousness is clipping the wings of creativity


PHOTO : MARTIN ROBERT

Felippe Martin, Lecturer in Film at Université Laval

As a documentary filmmaker, Felippe Martin illustrates perfectly the relevance and rich contribution of university lecturers. His practical, hands-on expertise has shaped in no small measure the way he has been teaching for the past four years.

That being said, he admits that his precarious status at the university weighs heavily on his work. His employment contracts are signed late. Unfortunately, he pointed out, "For a course starting in January, I might not sign the contract until December. And it can be cancelled at the last minute because of low enrolment." To make a living, he is forced to seek out other contracts in film production and therefore cannot make teaching a priority. It is a scheduling and budgeting headache. Needless to say, course preparation can suffer as a result. It's impossible to put together the best course from scratch under such time pressures. It's impossible to teach an existing course without time to familiarize yourself with the material and adapt it. And that's not even counting the wasted effort in the event of a sudden cancellation. The conditions are what they are, and they're not encouraging.

Felippe laments what he sees as a structural problem at the university: a course's survival too often depends on the number of students enrolled, and thus on the revenue it generates, instead of on the university's mission, which should be to educate and develop empowered citizens capable of critical thinking, discernment and analysis. Felippe believes that offering strictly profit-driven courses is incompatible with education in the arts. "In the arts, students need guidance," he explained. "You can't just impart your knowledge. For a student to create, they have to look deep within themselves. With 40 or 50 students or more in a class, we're not delivering the best possible course, because we can't guide them in their creative process; we're just filling the seats."

The threat of AI

Felippe acknowledges the usefulness of AI in his field for such tasks as producing subtitles, translating dialogue and correcting pixels in images. However, he is concerned about the fact that some students believe AI can think. "AI doesn't think for us! So, what am I trying to teach?" he asked. He answered his own question: "I'm trying to teach you to think for yourself. Don't try to please me. We'll find your truth together because that's where your creativity will come from." The creative process, he pointed out, can emerge from reflection that engages our hearts and our feelings, not just our minds. True to his principles, Felippe is critical of the pressure exerted by the AI giants and their strategies to sell subscriptions. "They offer small discounts to students, claiming it will help them, but ultimately, it doesn't help them at all if they decide to use it to 'think' for them."

Similarly, he is concerned about the normalization of a kind of laziness. Are we losing sight of the importance of putting in effort? Do we take the time to read books? Are we too obsessed with the temptation to go faster and faster? "I'd rather grade an incomplete, imperfect piece of work that stems from human thought than a polished product like the ones AI churns out," he said. "When there's no more water to cool the servers, who's going to think for us?"

Smaller groups to tackle a mountain of challenges

"The truth is that we need more staff, more teachers and lower student-to-teacher ratios." Adam Pétrin, who teaches social work at CEGEP Marie-Victorin, doesn't mince words in identifying the main source of problems at the CEGEP: it all comes down to a lack of resources. With empty coffers, how can we address the challenges faced by a student population that is struggling and is sometimes even in distress? How can we provide state-of-the-art equipment and classrooms? How can we adequately manage AI?


PHOTO : MARTIN ROBERT

Adam Pétrin, social work teacher at CEGEP Marie-Victorin

Students' educational paths are becoming more complex

Adam has observed an exponential increase in anxiety disorders in his classes. This is somewhat ironic, he admits, given that the purpose of a social work intervention is often to alleviate anxiety. A person can overcome their anxiety when they take the time needed to find solutions. Adam takes his role in preparing students to transition into the workforce very seriously. He is afraid that he won't be helping anyone if he merely applies the approved accommodations without providing support or looking at ways to manage anxiety. He outlined his approach as follows: "When I work with an intern who has limitations, I explain this to them. I tell them that they'll need to find strategies. Ultimately, they often succeed without needing accommodations. It's a form of transition into the workforce, but it takes a lot of time to get there."

Unfortunately, time is something that is sorely lacking in our CEGEPs. One fifth of the students at Marie-Victorin have an intervention plan or personalized services, for a variety of reasons. Adam listed a number of accommodations that are certainly justified but nonetheless create an excessive workload, especially when classes are overcrowded. "It changes the teaching relationship. It changes the job," he explained. "For example, giving students one-third more time and adapting teaching methods make the workload heavier, because you have to create custom assessments tailored to each student's needs. At the same time, we don't have any additional resources to help us." This explains the importance of reducing class sizes—a goal that is impossible to achieve without adequate funding.

AI exacerbates the pressure

Non-existent just three years ago, artificial intelligence now creates an unhealthy climate of suspicion and, consequently, excessive workloads. Sometimes, the fingerprints of AI on a student paper can give laughable results. Adam gave an example: "In a course on civil rights advocacy, some students used AI to find local resources. The chatbot had no qualms about inventing imaginary organizations." If only it were true!

At other times, the effect can be more damaging. "When I grade a well-written paper, I ask myself: Is this AI, or is it truly high-quality work because the student has mastered the subject and writes well?" Trying to identify cheaters adds to the teacher's workload and undermines the relationship of trust, especially since it's impossible to prove cheating beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Grading therefore has to be adapted. Evaluations now take place mostly in a classroom setting. Otherwise, close monitoring is required throughout the writing process—by asking questions, discussing the work, or even conducting individual interviews. Once again, there isn't enough time. Under these circumstances, Adam is concerned about the cognitive offloading caused by AI. In his view, students' ability to think critically is being eroded. Furthermore, unlike homework assignments, in-class assessments force students to regurgitate the material. He draws a stark conclusion: "It really boils down to a fast-food mentality and rote learning. A week later, no one remembers a thing." AI was supposed to save us time, but in fact, it seems to be making us waste time.

Teaching: A rewarding profession that deserves greater recognition



PHOTO : MARTIN ROBERT

Marie-Ève Perrotte, learning support specialist at Collège Mont-Saint-Louis

The years have done little to diminish Marie-Ève Perrotte's commitment and motivation. A teacher by training, she has worked for 26 years at Collège Mont-Saint-Louis, where she was a student before becoming a French teacher and then a learning support specialist, which has been her job for the last 20 years. She is the only person in this role serving all students at the private high school in Montréal's north end. Despite the magnitude of the challenge—needs continue to grow—the enthusiasm with which she explains her duties and the many strategies she uses to foster student success clearly reflect her deep affection for the school community.

She works actively with students in all five years of the Québec secondary school system who face challenges with writing, as proficiency in French is a key predictor of success. She also introduces students diagnosed with dyslexia or dysorthography to technological tools. She identifies students experiencing difficulties and works with them one-on-one.

In the first two years of secondary school, there are few formal intervention plans. Evaluations are designed so that all students can complete them without needing extra time. However, in the last three years of high school students must have a formal intervention plan to qualify for extra time when taking education ministry exams. The third year of secondary school thus becomes a pivotal point for identifying learning difficulties. "We have exceptionally strong students, average students and weaker students," Marie-Ève explained. "This diversity requires us to be creative and to practise differentiated instruction. The administration gives me carte blanche. They trust me and support all of my projects. I'm also inspired by colleagues who are open to initiatives such as co-teaching."

Attracting and retaining new teachers

However, Marie-Ève laments the fact that her profession attracts so few people and is so undervalued in our society: "I just hear the words coming out of my 20-year-old son's mouth about my job. He would make a good teacher, but he doesn't want to go into this field because it isn't prestigious. I find that really hard to take. It stems from a far too widespread misunderstanding of my work."

The start of every school year sees a raft of media reports about Québec's teacher shortage. The situation has become so bad that the previous government had to take desperate measures and promise "an adult in every classroom by September"—regardless of whether or not that person was a qualified teacher. We all know about the entirely predictable failure of the Québec Perspective Scholarship Program, which provided free tuition for new students enrolled in university teacher training programs. University departments of education continue to struggle with low enrolment.

Marie-Ève believes that paid teaching practicums could help attract future teachers and enhance the profession's reputation. Why are internships in engineering and law, for example, paid, while teaching practicums are not? To her mind, the system is unfair to both the teachers of the future and the students: "I had to work during my practicums. When that happens, you don't give as much. You have less time. You're exhausted. You don't always feel like continuing." Class sizes and workload also need to be addressed.

Overall, she feels that teaching is a demanding but noble profession: "We're responsible for a whole host of things, including the students' well-being. So, even before we start teaching, we have to be careful about what we say and what we do. We're role models, and it all happens in a context where some parents are no longer committed to, or involved in, their children's education."

All these responsibilities could turn you off teaching. But kindling students' passion and guiding them toward success are powerful sources of motivation and fulfilment. That is why she loves her job.

Dreaming of this career means dreaming of paying the rent

When you're a student working at the university, you're often in survival mode. That's no exaggeration. For the next generation of professionals, the spiralling cost of living—including rampant inflation, exorbitant grocery prices, unaffordable housing and high tuition fees—makes it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Naturally, their precarious financial situation is the first thing Théa Bashore and her colleagues mention when asked about the problems with their working conditions at the university. Before even thinking about the nature of the job, you must have enough to eat and a roof over your head.

Théa works as a research assistant at Concordia University. She decided to get involved in her union's bargaining talks to address her own and her colleagues' poor working conditions. "We don't have a seniority system; we don't have a tenure system," she explained. "This means not only financial instability and precariousness for our members, but also that there isn't really any transparency in how contracts are awarded." In short, without a seniority list—a basic principle of unionism—selection becomes arbitrary. The employer can, on a whim, award contracts to one person and not another. This creates a risk of discrimination or favouritism.

Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to plan from one session to the next, because the future is always uncertain and a source of anxiety. Théa reports that it's not uncommon to see colleagues drop classes to find a second job, prolong their academic studies to free up time for work, or—worse still—simply throw in the towel and give up on their education altogether.

When asked why she persists in working at such an unattractive job, Théa gives a commendable answer that goes to the heart of the university's mission: "Working as a student enables you to broaden your horizons; it lets you learn while paying your rent. It's a way to build up your CV and gain real-world experience in a university setting. It can prepare you to teach and become a professor in the future." She adds that her work keeps the university running; without the contribution of student workers, professors would be even more overwhelmed than they are now and would have to cut back on their teaching.



PHOTO : MARTIN ROBERT

Théa Bashore, head of the Concordia Research and Education Workers Union (CREW–CSN) bargaining committee

AI: A sword of Damocles?

Théa fears for the jobs of student workers. "We see the AI pipeline coming, at a lower cost, but would the work be of the same quality?" she wonders. Grading, for example, requires human judgment tailored to the student's individual situation, highlighting their strengths and pointing out their weaknesses. Can a machine offer such personalized support?

As universities struggle to cope with chronic underfunding and belt-tightening budgetary policies by cutting corners wherever they can, what does this mean for the quality of education in Québec? Théa points out that the purpose of the higher education system is not simply to hand out grades: we need to move away from the "diploma factory" mentality. Her view echoes the concerns expressed by many educators who are concerned about the sudden emergence of artificial intelligence and the resulting cognitive offloading. Is AI reducing people's ability to learn and think?

Théa summed up her position in these words: "Ultimately, as a society, it's worth investing in education and in the real people who help to pass on knowledge."



Tools for action

By Nova Doyon, member of the Environment Committee

IN November, the team behind the project *Transformations en cours : l'enseignement pour la transition écologique et sociale*, coordinated by Travailleuses et travailleurs pour la justice climatique (TJC) and the FNEEQ, launched two tools to support the greening of the higher education system: a summary of the positions adopted by the students and faculty who participated in the January 2026 *États généraux de l'enseignement pour la transition écologique et sociale, et la communauté de pratique enseignante nationale*, the goal of which is to promote the integration of social and ecological transition principles into teaching.

The Estates General provided an opportunity for approximately 250 participants from CEGEPs and universities across Québec to reflect on ways to transform higher education and thereby address the challenges posed by the social and ecological crisis.

Two essential tools for higher education

The resulting document, entitled *Transition socioécologique en enseignement supérieur : 50 propositions pour agir*, serves as a roadmap for the socio-ecological transition in higher education. Students and faculty are encouraged to take ownership of the proposals at their general meetings to support a greening approach within their respective institutions.

The provincial community of practice not only provides a space for teachers at both CEGEPs and universities to share knowledge, experiences and educational resources but also opens the door to collaboration with community organizations. The community of practice's web platform offers opportunities to network with local organizations, activist groups, and even artists willing to partner with faculty to develop educational activities in the field.

Additional project resources coming in 2027

Other resources have been developed—in part thanks to the support of working groups established following the Estates General—to address the needs of the CEGEP and university communities.

Specifically, two participatory workshops designed to drive action within institutions are being offered, one focused on brainstorming educational projects that promote the socio-ecological transition and the other on identifying the levers needed to carry out priority greening initiatives for the community. In addition, ideas for demands targeting progress on the socio-ecological transition—proposals that will undoubtedly inspire a number of FNEEQ unions—will be circulated when the collective agreement of CEGEP teachers comes up for renewal. Finally, in response to proposals made at the Estates General for recognition of higher education's role in the socio-ecological transition, there are plans to submit public policy proposals to the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur. These proposals focus on adapting curricula and training programs and empowering students so that they can actively participate in the socio-ecological transition.



Global conference with local impact

By Saleha Hedaraly, officer responsible for the Women's Committee

From September 15 to 18, 2026, FNEEQ representatives attended the 5th World Women's Conference in Bahia, Brazil. The Conference was organized by Education International (EI), with which the FNEEQ is affiliated. EI brings together 375 member organizations representing more than 33 million teachers and education support staff in 180 countries and territories.

More than 300 women from 125 organizations attended the Conference. A variety of informal and formal activities fostered networking (lunches, workshops, happy hours, etc.). Simultaneous interpretation in four languages (French, English, Portuguese and Spanish) enabled everyone to participate in the discussions.

Dr. Aruna Rao, co-founder and former director of Gender at Work and currently Chair of the Board of Oxfam International, delivered a rousing speech on feminist leadership in education and strategies for social change. She explained in detail how feminism addresses not only visible forms of inequality but also the deeper layers where gender-based discrimination and violence, as well as intersectional discrimination, operate. Stereotypes have not disappeared; they have become more insidious.

We also attended the launch of EI's new platform on the *Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026–2029*. To provide strategic guidance to EI and its member organizations, concrete measures were identified and proposed across five priorities: profession, public education, people, planet and power.

Next, a highly illuminating plenary session examining the teacher shortage through a gender lens brought out the consequences of the vulnerability inherent in the feminization of our profession. This was followed by practical workshops designed to identify measures taken by unions to promote the recruitment and retention of female teachers, and to pinpoint policy changes to address both the teacher shortage and gender inequality.

Parallels with Québec

Collective bargaining was the focus of the second workshop, which involved a discussion about the legitimacy of feminist demands and the challenges that exist at times even within union teams on these issues. Real-life examples—the struggles of the Francophone minority in Switzerland and the underrepresentation of women in Morocco's union system—find ready parallels in Québec.

A workshop on misogyny in the classroom strongly resonated with what is happening in Québec. Examples from Australia, South Africa and the United Kingdom highlighted the rise in violence perpetrated by students and the need for governments to improve health and safety protocols and take action to address structural sexism (equitable pay and working conditions, greater equity in leadership, etc.). The workshop underscored the importance of local action as well as the sharing of initiatives.

The Conference concluded with a discussion on union responses to attacks on democracy and the adoption of the *Bahia Declaration*, which calls for equal pay and pensions, protection against all forms of violence and harassment, and a commitment to ratify and implement Convention C190, which addresses these issues.



Hélène Nazon
LITERATURE TEACHER AT CEGEP GARNEAU AND MEMBER OF THE FNEEQ WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The FNEEQ Women's Committee is thrilled to invite you to attend the conference *Ensemble, écrire la suite*, to be held at the CSN's offices in Montréal on April 15 and 16, 2027. The goal is to create a space for reflecting collectively on feminist and union resistance.

How can we counter hate speech?

Whether they're called "incels" or "alpha males," the spokesmen for toxic masculinity promote regressive values, and the repercussions are very real in our schools. The talks by researchers Mélissa Blais and Francis Dupuis-Déri will definitely provide food for thought!

Feminism and unionism: A shared history

From past to present, women have played an important role in labour unions. The talk by historian Camille Robert and the panel on contemporary struggles (international solidarity and ecofeminism) will provide an opportunity to explore past and present strategies.

How can we amplify feminist voices?

The obstacles faced by women—both within union leadership and in the public sphere (anti-LGBTQ+ attacks, intolerance toward women from marginalized groups)—are legion. Together with Maïka Sondarjee and other speakers, we'll identify potential solutions to foster concerted action in our struggles.

Workshops: Spotlight on the community

Finally, we'll wrap up the conference with workshops led by our community group allies. From the right to the city to self-defence, these workshops promise to be fascinating.

We look forward to seeing you there!



CAUT Conference: Strengthening solidarity to combat precarious employment in universities

Christine Gauthier
VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE REGROUPEMENT UNIVERSITÉ

"When you're an employee with precarious status, some administrations think you're just working for fun, that it's a bonus contract on top of your other commitments."

This troubling statement was made during the Contract Academic Staff Conference held in Halifax on October 1 and 2, 2026. Organized by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the Conference brought together university union members from across Canada to discuss ways to strengthen collective action and better protect contract academic staff.

The guest international panelists highlighted the scale of the current challenges posed by precarious employment: around the world (in the United Kingdom, Denmark and elsewhere), it is becoming more difficult than ever to secure a tenured position at a university or to build a sustainable academic career, rather than just a string of temporary contracts.

Furthermore, the advent of generative artificial intelligence requires considerable extra effort to combat the job insecurity threatening university teachers. What strategies should be employed, and how can we address the gaps in collective agreements regarding job security and respect for the rights of contract academic staff?

During the session in which I was a guest panelist, I proposed—based on the work of the Regroupement Université's artificial intelligence committee—eight areas of focus for collective agreements to protect employees engaged in precarious work in the age of AI.

AI: Eight areas of focus

1) Adding protections against technological change

2) Countering the fragmentation of work

3) Not increasing class sizes, regardless of the teaching format

4) Fighting the automation of grading

5) Providing support to address the challenges of evaluation

6) Protecting intellectual integrity and intellectual property

7) Supporting digital literacy and job skills

8) Participating in governance to promote greater equity. These efforts are necessary to prevent the employer from unilaterally changing our working conditions and to establish legal guardrails against the onslaught of AI.

More broadly, participants urged union members to support critical political discourse in the face of the large-scale integration of technology in universities and to advocate for a more humanistic approach to the future of higher education. In light of the anticipated consequences for academic work, jobs and learning, they stressed the urgency of limiting the use of generative AI, which is also threatening our edifice of knowledge.

The strength of our solidarity remains our main weapon in combating precarious employment and resisting the excesses of technocapitalism. Faced with university governance that is increasingly assisted by outside consultants rather than being grounded in genuine collegiality, we must focus on the struggles that unite the university community as a whole.

A clear message came out of this conference: part-time academic staff are deeply committed to their work and demand respect and greater recognition for their contribution to their universities.

GET READY FOR THE 2028 BARGAINING ROUND !

Yves de Repentigny
VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE REGROUPEMENT CÉGEP


PHOTO : DOMINIC MORISSETTE

We're back! What, already? Yes. Though our current collective agreement doesn't expire until March 31, 2028, the Regroupement Cégep is already hard at work preparing for the next round of bargaining. Renewing a collective agreement is a lengthy undertaking.

At its meeting on October 22 and 23, the Regroupement elected a new bargaining and mobilization committee. It comprises Sébastien Adam (Cégep de Rosemont), who will be responsible for mobilization and communications; Roxane Fortier (Cégep de Thetford); Sylvain Jomphe (Cégep de Jonquière); Maria Mastorakos (John Abbott College); and Nathalie Pilon (Collège de Maisonneuve). Joining them are Josée Déziel (Collège Ahuntsic), coordinator of the Regroupement and ex officio member, and Guillaume Forest-Allard, FNEEQ union advisor, who will serve as spokesperson at the sectoral table (where working conditions specific to CEGEP teachers are discussed).

As soon as it takes office next January, the bargaining and mobilization committee will begin organizing a round of consultations at general assemblies. The committee will use the input from those meetings to prepare its list of sectoral demands, which it must submit to the employer's bargaining committee, the *Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC)*, at the end of October 2027, as required by law. To this end, it will draw on the list of issues, which was used in the two previous rounds of talks and updated at the Regroupement's November 2026 meeting. It will take into account the inter-round work provided for in the 2023–2028 agreement, which covers work organization and workload in health technology, social services and animal health programs, travel time, the *Commission pédagogique*, follow-up on the weekend internship pilot project in nursing, and research. It will also draw on the analyses and deliberations of the ad hoc committees the Regroupement set up to examine the realities and challenges facing regional CEGEPs, artificial intelligence, and funding and workload.

During the recent election campaign, the PQ announced plans to fund public services at a level that would not even cover the rising cost of maintaining existing services, so we can expect difficult negotiations. Given the circumstances, it will come as no surprise that the CSN is exploring the possibility of taking part in a common front at the central bargaining table, where issues common to all job categories, such as salaries and the pension plan, are discussed. Similarly, at the sectoral level, the FNEEQ is exploring an alliance with the Fédération de l'enseignement collégial (FEC-CSQ). To be continued!

The vital role of small-town CEGEPs

The Regroupement met in Carleton-sur-Mer on September 10 and 11, in the midst of the provincial election campaign. It took the opportunity to hold a demonstration to remind the provincial parties of the importance of CEGEPs located outside the major urban centres. These colleges ensure access to higher education throughout Québec and contribute to the vitality of their communities as major economic, cultural and sports hubs. Among the issues raised in speeches and media interviews were the specific demands of teaching at regional CEGEPs (for example, small classes can mean a lot of course preparation), underfunding of the entire CEGEP network, decrepit facilities and declining international enrolment.



Demonstration at Carleton-sur-Mer to underscore the importance of regional CEGEPs.

MOBILIZING FOR THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES AND RECOGNITION OF OUR WORK

Christine Gauthier
VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE REGROUPEMENT UNIVERSITÉ


PHOTO : DOMINIC MORISSETTE

I was very proud to see the university community stand together on September 22 to send a clear, united message: "*Universities belong to us all. Investing in universities is an investment for everyone in Québec.*"

Lecturers, professors, researchers, support staff and students at virtually every university in Québec participated in this unprecedented mobilization. We all simultaneously unfurled a banner to demand that political parties commit to increasing the share of public funding for universities.

Chronic underfunding over the years has taken a toll on universities' ability to fulfil their mission and keep higher education accessible. The *Table des partenaires universitaires (TPU)*, of which the FNEEQ is a member, therefore set out to highlight the harm that the budget squeeze is causing to staff and students: unfilled positions, excessive workloads, growing job insecurity, reduced services, rising extra fees, hobbled research and weakened programs. The new Parti Québécois government must commit to reversing this trend.

"Teaching Today, Shaping Tomorrow"

Once again this year, *National Course Lecturers Day* is an opportunity to highlight our members' commitment to university education. With their cutting-edge knowledge, professional experience and dedication to their students, these lecturers, part-time profs, tutors and internship supervisors help shape the society of the future.

This human work is essential to the future of higher education. By supporting student learning, guiding students' academic journeys and fostering reflective and critical thinking, contract faculty play a critical role in preparing the next generations of leaders to work in a changing world and face an array of environmental, ethical, social and economic challenges.

These teachers are also committed to their disciplines and contribute to scientific and media debates. The Regroupement Université research committee has taken steps to highlight this important work. It has compiled a directory of our members' recent artistic creations, publications and papers, which we will proudly submit to Québec's new Chief Scientist to advocate for the creation of a research fund dedicated to lecturers.

Coordinated bargaining yields gains

Coordinated bargaining by the unions in the Regroupement Université is a key lever for securing gains for lecturers. SCCCUQAR has negotiated an excellent agreement which delivers on several union demands, including recognition of research and stronger protections against AI. We have also formalized the creation of a retirement coordinating committee bringing together the unions and Université du Québec to negotiate improvements for our members.

On the mobilization front, the unions in the Regroupement Université consistently step up to support bargaining efforts, as they did in September at Université du Québec en Outaouais' Saint-Jérôme campus. On these occasions, members can see that behind their just demands stands a powerful union force, ready to mobilize to support them.

REGROUPEMENT PRIVÉ : NEGOTIATING CHANGE

Fall 2026 brought plenty of changes for the Regroupement Privé, but we rose to the occasion! Despite some ups and downs, the October meeting was a great success, once again drawing a record number of unions.

Léandre Lapointe's departure

The Regroupement Privé was deeply saddened to learn that Léandre Lapointe was leaving the role of Vice-President for the Regroupement. We want to thank Léandre for his commitment and dedication over the past nine years. Léandre's union values helped shape important initiatives such as coordinated bargaining and support for small unions. Saleha Hedaraly will serve as acting vice-president until a new vice-president is elected at the December 2026 Federal Council meeting.

The Regroupement Privé welcomes its 50th union

The coordinating team is proud to announce that the Syndicat des travailleuses et travailleurs du Collège Saint-Hilaire–CSN has joined the Regroupement Privé as its 50th union. Seeking to improve their working conditions and ensure that their professional autonomy is respected, staff chose the FNEEQ to help them defend their demands in discussions with the administration. Bargaining for their first FNEEQ collective agreement will begin in the coming months. We wish our new members every success!

Agreements in principle and ongoing negotiations

Three agreements in principle were reached over the past few months. The Syndicat des enseignantes et des enseignants du Pensionnat du Saint-Nom-de-Marie secured its first collective agreement after less than a year of bargaining, following mobilization activities and strike mandates. The Syndicat des enseignantes et des enseignants du Collège Pasteur and the Syndicat des enseignantes et des enseignants du Séminaire Saint-François both ultimately reached agreements, avoiding major rollbacks in working conditions.

As of this writing, six unions are still negotiating, including the Syndicat des enseignantes et enseignants du Collège Saint-Charles Garnier and the Association des professeurs du Collège Stanislas. Both have begun mobilizing.

In recent years, mobilization has gained momentum within the Regroupement, reflecting our unions' commitment to advancing legitimate demands on issues such as heavy workloads, professional autonomy and union leave.

LaSalle College

LaSalle College has been in the news for more than a year over a $30 million penalty imposed by the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur for exceeding the cap on the number of English-speaking students. A $17 million overpayment from the previous year was added to the debt. To recover the amount owed, the ministry withheld the initial funding allocation at the start of the fall 2026 term. The College then sought creditor protection. Legal proceedings are underway to keep the College open. For now, the Superior Court has ordered the ministry to pay in full the funding the College would normally receive. The financial instability has left staff uncertain about their future. The FNEEQ has spoken out in support of protecting the jobs of more than 440 teachers and will continue to follow the situation closely.



Students received support from the FNEEQ, the CSN, the Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain and the Syndicat des enseignantes et enseignants du Collège LaSalle at a demonstration held at the start of the school year.

BUILDING THE FUTURE, ONE BRICK AT A TIME

Saleha Hedaraly
ACTING VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE REGROUPEMENT PRIVÉ, VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE STUDENT WORKER CAUCUS AND UNIONS OUTSIDE THE REGROUPEMENTS



PHOTO : DOMINIC MORISSETTE

The Student Worker Caucus is starting the school year on the right foot, though not without facing its share of challenges. The Concordia Research and Education Workers Union (CREW–CSN) had to overcome the university's reluctance to negotiate. The administration wanted to extend the collective agreement as is, but it didn't count on CREW's determination. The university also appears to be questioning the principle of open bargaining, in which negotiations between the employer and the union take place in front of the members, although this didn't seem to be a problem in the last bargaining round.

Negotiations are also dragging on for two units of the Teaching Support Union at McGill (TSUM). The exam invigilators' bargaining team is seeking a mandate for pressure tactics after a disappointing monetary offer, and teaching assistants are still negotiating their first collective agreement, more than two years after obtaining union certification.

Fruitful meetings

Implementation of the recommendations of the working committee on the Caucus is proving useful: the FNEEQ now meets regularly with each of the executive committees to exchange information, ensuring smooth communication and prompt handling of issues before they escalate.

The Caucus has also adopted the format recommended by its working committee: a presentation followed by a workshop to put it into practice. The first meeting examined the provisions of the *Act to improve the transparency, governance and democratic process of various associations in the workplace* (Act 4). The ensuing discussion of best practices was especially useful given the turnover of union officers.

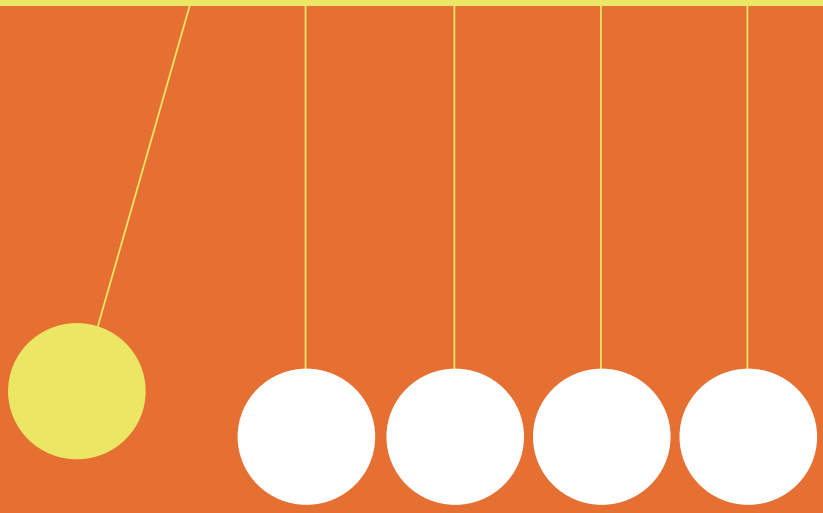
The second fall meeting of the Caucus dealt with activism in student worker unions. How can stability be maintained in a union of contract workers with such high turnover? For the first time, there was also a joint presentation by the Regroupement Université and the Caucus. It underscored that the culture of precariousness in our universities must change, and that fighting it unites all those who suffer from it.

Also for the first time, the Syndicat des résidentes et résidents internes de la Faculté de médecine vétérinaire–CSN (SRRI) attended a meeting of the Caucus. This led to an in-depth discussion of AI, in which Concordia, McGill and Université de Montréal expressed diametrically opposed views.

The Caucus is also working jointly with the FNEEQ on a report on open bargaining, which should prove especially relevant now that employers appear intent on restricting the practice. The Caucus's unique experience will shed light on how open bargaining can be structured in Québec.

Departure of Kiersten van Vliet

Finally, the Caucus regretfully bids farewell to its coordinator, Kiersten van Vliet, who has become the coordinator of the Confederation of Faculty Associations of McGill (COFAM). Kiersten's dedication, work ethic and creativity have been crucial to the Caucus's stability and to promoting the role of student workers within our Federation. We wish her every success in her new role. We're proud of you, Kiersten!



Teaching Today, *Shaping Tomorrow*

NOVEMBER 22, 2026

NATIONAL COURSE LECTURERS DAY

fneeq CSN
Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec