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**PACKAGE OF DEMANDS FOR THE
RENEWAL OF THE S18
COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

October 28th, 2022



On The Right Side

**The side of
SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF**



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INTRODUCTION

Support staff employees are essential in the operation of the education network yet, they are often left in the shadows and unjustly neglected. Their importance to the network was brightly illustrated during the pandemic. In particular, the rigorous disinfection of our buildings, the welcoming of children in emergency daycares, the implementation of a telework infrastructure, as well as the support for children made vulnerable by the pandemic.

This historic situation brought to light existing problems in our workplaces. The workload, heavy before the pandemic, grew larger in all job categories; a situation which translates to an increase in burnouts and psychological distress.

The current labour shortage puts the education network under enormous pressure. Furthermore, the public sector is not as attractive to the employees as it once was. Budget cuts, which have been ongoing for decades throughout the education network, are responsible for the sizeable increase in workloads and deterioration of working conditions.

This round of negotiations is the perfect occasion to recognize the essential contributions of school support staff and, moreover, ensure the durability and quality of services. Working conditions must be made more attractive to recruit new employees and hold on to the experienced ones. In this context, we must, among other actions, reduce job insecurity, improve working conditions, and make our workplaces safer.

Our negotiation draft will bring solutions to these challenges. It is divided into seven broad targets:

- Taking action to improve health and safety;
- Reducing job insecurity ;
- Improving working conditions ;
- Valuing the work of the support staff;
- Promoting the movement of personnel ;
- Enriching the insurance plan ;
- Promoting labour relations.

This draft is the result of multi-stage consultations with the members we represent. It brings forward their concerns and needs. The School Sector of the FEESP-CSN will be submitting this package of negotiation demands which are the subject of an in-depth reflection by our 35,000 members.

The FEESP-CSN School Sector negotiating committee,

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TARGET 1: TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE HEALTH & SAFETY

The psycho-social risks related to poor work organisation, management practices, working conditions and work relationships have detrimental effects on employees' health. As well, they often generate direct and indirect costs to the employer. Notably, disability benefits, the CNESST contribution rates, as well as the work presence and retention of personnel. In this context, workplace health and safety is everyone's business!

The number of calls made by distressed employees are abundant. All classes of employment have denounced work overloads. The resulting stress and fatigue have severe repercussions on personal life, quality of work and moreover, the health of the employee.

Many surveys have revealed the magnitude violence in the school sector. Despite this, support staff are still being exposed to various types of violence from students. Proportionally, physical aggression constitutes a major source of incidents. As such, a significant investment in prevention must be made.

The reform of the "*Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety*" gives us a perfect reason to improve our prevention mechanisms.

Demand n° 1: Filling a Temporarily Vacant Post

The possibility of not being able to fill a temporary vacancy, long deadlines in which to replace said temporary vacancy and finally the absence of a replacement sequence can result in an increased workload for the team and/or the employee upon his/her return.

Proposed Solution:	
1	Review the process of replacing those temporarily vacant posts, and this, for all sectors.

Demand n° 2: Implementation of Ratios

Ratios can offer the possibility of establishing a reasonable standard when it comes to workload. With respect to school secretaries, many elements must be taken into consideration when establishing a ratio, to properly encompass the extent of their tasks.

As far as student supervisors are concerned, they are entrusted with several dozen students, and as such, it is sometimes difficult to ensure diligent and constant supervision. The students' safety depends on it.

Proposed Solutions:	
2.1	Establish a ratio for school secretaries;
2.2	Establish a ratio for elementary school student supervisors.

In daycare, ratios are not adapted to the characteristics of the clientele. By the same token, support services in special education are non-existent in daycares. This situation affects the quality of service as much as the workload. We have also observed a considerable lack and inequity when it comes to administrative time for the technician, which is a source of overload for him/her.

Many educators find themselves alone at the beginning or end of the day. Alone in big buildings and in the presence of students, these educators face many risks. This must be fixed.

Proposed Solutions:	
2.3	Provide a specific ratio for preschool clientele;
2.4	See to it that a student's special education code follows them in daycare and with student supervisors;
2.5	Ensure that any daycare employee is never left alone in the school;
2.6	Provide administrative time for the daycare technicians.

Demand n° 3: Quality of Work-Life

Certain clientele represent a higher inherent risk. Staff providing the required services are therefore exposed to higher levels of risk, on a daily basis. Failing the prevention of violence at the source, the exposed employees should receive fair compensation.

Proposed Solutions:	
3.1	Provisions concerning physical and psychological violence by the students should be made;
3.2	Compensate the employee working with students with severe behavioural problems.

Demand n° 4: Parity Committee Prevention Mechanisms

Since the last round of negotiations, the government adopted revisions to the “*Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety*”. In the school sector, these revisions involved changes such as the creation of a committee and an addition of a health and safety representative. In order to standardize these practices and implement these health and safety mechanisms, the collective agreement should incorporate the method of application.

Proposed Solutions:	
4.1	The creation of a workplace health and safety committee specifically for support staff;
4.2	Codify and enhance the changes to the “ <i>Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety</i> ” in the collective agreement.

TARGET 2: REDUCE JOB INSECURITY

The disparity in working conditions, whether it be from an increase in workload, a specific position, or added hours, is a contributing factor to job insecurity. These factors can very well discourage new employees from pursuing their careers as they are often marked in the beginning by uncertainty. We believe it is high time to work out common solutions to be able to offer quality jobs to support staff.

Demand n° 5: Clearly Define Specific Positions

The increase of specific positions at school boards keeps our members in job insecurity. In the hopes of making specific positions as attractive as possible, we believe the time spent in a specific position, as with regular posts, be recognized for the calculation of obtaining tenure.

Proposed Solution:	
5	That the length of time working in a specific position be calculated towards obtaining tenure.

Demand n° 6: Improve Working Conditions for Temporary Employees

The rules surrounding access to benefits for temporary employees are a source of insecurity. These rules cause an unjustified distinction among all employees.

Proposed Solutions:	
6.1	Reduce the period of time required to gain access to the benefits of the collective agreement;
6.2	Review the procedures defining an interruption of service;
6.3	Reduce the number of hours to obtain tenure.

Demand n° 7: Transmission of Information

The increase in workload assignments must respond to sudden needs in a limited time frame. Unfortunately, they are sometimes used to avoid granting a full-time post or to improve a position at a discount. In order to properly evaluate real needs when the staffing plan is being created, we should have in hand the increase in workload and overtime lists.

Proposed Solution:	
7	That the school board provide the union with the increase of workload and overtime lists.

Demand n° 8: Creation of Floating Support Teams

The creation of floating support teams and posts answers three main concerns: reducing precarity, ensuring short-term absences are filled, as well as offering support to employees. Support teams already exist in the school network. This practice must be properly managed.

Proposed Solution:	
8	Install and support the creation of Floating Support Teams

Demand n° 9: Adequately Prepare the Next Generation

The network is undergoing a major renewal of its work force. To meet this challenge, we need the right conditions to enable the transfer of knowledge and experience so that new employees may better adapt to their workload. In this vein, it is essential to put in place winning conditions for the smooth introduction and integration of new employees.

Proposed Solution:	
9	Establish a mentorship plan and compensate those peers shouldering the responsibility.

Demand n° 10: Minimum Working Time

A short work assignment, in some cases punctuated with interruptions and travel, is a source of precarity. We are proposing to establish standards which consist of a minimum working period during the day.

Proposed Solution:	
10	Plan a minimum working period.

Demand n° 11: Improve Working Conditions for Employees Covered by Chapter 10-0.00

The work of Chapter 10-0.00 employees is essential to our organization. We believe that the time is right to regulate their working conditions by having them benefit from the rights of the collective agreement.

Proposed Solutions:	
11.1	Integrate Chapter 10-0.00 to the general sector;
11.2	Allow access to the premiums of Article 6-6.00.

TARGET 3: IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS

The shortage of manpower, we believe, requires that we offer more attractive working conditions. The solutions we propose target all categories of employees. They represent, among other things, members calling for more free time. Several demands will allow for the improvement of methods of practice, notably from the perspective of efficient organisation of work and improvement of student services.

Demand n° 12: Special Leaves and Family Responsibility

According to our members' wishes, it was agreed to pay particular attention to the enhancement of various leaves. As well, we are asking for more flexibility in the application of special leaves to better correspond to the needs of the situation.

Proposed Solutions:	
12.1	Allow for special leaves to be taken in a discontinuous manner;
12.2	Review the number of days allowed for family responsibility;
12.3	Addition of leave for personal business;
12.4	Modify clause 5-1.05 b) to include situations involving the employee.

Demand n° 13: Vacation

We are asking for an enhanced vacation period and a greater flexibility regarding the period during which said vacations may be taken.

Proposed Solutions:	
13.1	Remove the obligation to take vacation during the total/partial shutdown of activities;
13.2	Allow vacation when students are present;
13.3	Increase the number of vacation days.

Demand n° 14: Facilitate Access to Leaves of Absence Without Pay

The refusal of a leave of absence without pay presents the employee with a difficult choice: resign or stay. Today's labour market, unlike in the past, easily allows the employee to choose the first option. We believe that the terms and conditions of the leave of absence without pay should be somewhat relaxed.

Proposed Solutions:	
14.1	Provide a deadline for the employer to respond to the request for a leave of absence without pay;
14.2	Review the reasons for refusal;
14.3	That the difficulty to replace the employee in question should not be a valid reason to refuse a leave of absence for training or professional development.

Demand n° 15: Work Schedules

In certain cases, meal periods are too long. It seems to us that a framework is required. As such, access to a flexible schedule, for certain employee categories, would represent an important advantage, which also can benefit the board.

Proposed Solutions:	
15.1	Standardize the length of meal periods;
15.2	Look into the possibility of a flexible working schedule for maintenance employees;
15.3	Plan for staff members to be present on pedagogical days at the beginning and end of the year.

Demand n° 16: Reclassification

Paying employees according to the class of employment which corresponds to the main and habitual tasks they accomplish is a question of basic fairness. For the sake of respect, it is advisable to review the obstacles in acknowledging their work.

Proposed Solution:	
16	Review the deadline for submitting a grievance after obtaining a new post.

Demand n° 17: Loan and Rental of Rooms

For the sake of transparency, and to ensure the respect of the collective agreement, we ask that copies of the contracts for the loan and rental of rooms be submitted to the union.

Proposed Solution:	
17	That the unions have access to the copies of the contracts for loan & rental of rooms.

Demand n° 18: Preparation and Organization Time

Student supervisors covered by Chapter 10 often must volunteer their time for preparations, meetings and/or follow-up notes. A reasonable amount of time, dedicated to these tasks, should be integrated into their working schedule.

Proposed Solution:	
18	Install and standardize preparation and organization time for student supervisors covered by Chapter 10.

Demande n° 19: Travelling Time

The recent surge of the price of gas has brought a heavy burden on employees who are required use their personal vehicle for their work at the School Board. This situation has also shone light on the varied existing procedures and, in many cases, their inadequacy with the costs involved in using a vehicle.

Proposed Solution:	
19	Review the procedure for travelling time.

Demand n° 20: Telework

Exceptionally telework was introduced during the pandemic and has become a reality for a large portion of support staff. This situation has shown that teleworking is possible. In this regard, clear standardized rules of this practice should be included in the collective agreement.

Proposed Solution:	
20	See to it that provisions are made in order to standardize teleworking.

TARGET 4: VALUE THE WORK DONE BY SUPPORT STAFF

Support staff are essential to the proper functioning of the education network. Recognition of their work means making more of an effort to promote their contribution as well as their specific expertise. In this vein, we propose encouraging the participation of support staff in various committees, adequately compensate their contributions, promote their qualifications, and develop their skills.

Demand n° 21: Various Compensation

The participation of support staff in various committees should be promoted and recognized with fair compensation, as is the case with other classes of employment.

Furthermore, summer cleaning brings forward many organizational challenges, as well as high physical effort. They should be given a specific compensation.

Proposed Solutions:	
21.1	Provide compensation for those employees who participate in various committees;
21.2	Provide compensation for summer cleaning.

Demand n° 22: Participation in the “Intervention Plan”

To ensure that the intervention plan is as complete and effective as possible, we must promote the participation of all personnel concerned. The expertise, of support staff in relation to the students they support, should be solicited when it comes to the formulation and/or updating of the intervention plan.

Proposed Solution:	
22	See to it that all concerned employees participate in the intervention plan.

Demand n° 23: Training and Professional Development

School Boards would be better equipped to face the labour shortage if they create an organizational culture which promotes developing their employees' skills and qualifications. In this respect, we propose to further promote skill development.

Proposed Solution:	
23	Create a procedure for skill development.

Demand n° 24: Practice Fees

Another way of promoting the maintenance and acquisition of qualifications is to cover the inherent fees pertaining to the renewal of competency cards and practice permits.

Proposed Solution:	
24	That the School Board covers the fees pertaining to professional orders, certificates, competency cards as well as permits/licences to practice.

Demand n° 25: Recognition of Experience

In the general sector, we can compensate for missing education with pertinent experience. For the purpose of staff retention, we should consider applying this practice to the other classes of employment.

Proposed Solution:	
25	See to it that clause 7-1.13 applies to all personnel.

Demand n° 26: Temporary Lay-Off Period

During the temporary lay-off period, daycare personnel do not have priority for filling a job. This exclusion seems to us to be an inappropriate distinction.

Proposed Solution:	
26	Review the daycare employees' terms for the temporary lay-off period.

Demand n° 27: Premiums

Work schedules which include an interruption in the hours worked serve as an inconvenience to the incumbents. In this vein, there should be a specific premium applied. We also ask to maintain the premium for the certified maintenance employees until the renewal of the collective split shift.

Proposed Solutions:	
27.1	Arrange for a premium to be paid for every work interruption during the course of the day;
27.2	See to it that the premium for the certified maintenance employees is maintained until the renewal of the collective agreement.

Demand n° 28: Leaving on Retirement

We are asking for more flexibility when it comes to progressive retirement agreements. We are asking that the person wanting to retire should be able to take their progressive retirement by yearly block. Such an agreement could possibly facilitate the replacement of said employee.

Proposed Solution:	
28	Allow more flexibility for pre-retirement.

TARGET 5: PROMOTE MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL

The rules regarding movement of personnel must promote the employees' goals of improving their working conditions while respecting the rules of seniority. Some provisions of the collective agreement limit these objectives. For example, the rules for the security of employment mechanism should broaden the choice for a displaced employee. We believe acting to improve this mechanism of employee mobility is a positive step toward personnel retention.

Demand n° 29: Adaptation Period

We believe that within the framework of obtaining a specific position or a replacement, the employee should be granted an adaptation period and the right to return to their previous post, if they so wish.

Proposed Solution:	
29	Add to clause 7-1.07 that an adaptation period be granted following the employee obtaining a specific position or replacement.

Demand n° 30: Filling a Temporarily Vacant Post

We are asking to review the predetermined length of absence for applying the sequence provided for in article 7-1.18.

Proposed Solution:	
30	Review the provisions of 7-1.18 d).

Demand n° 31: Abolishing a Post

To respect the employee whose post is being abolished, we are asking that the notice of abolishment be sent quickly after the adoption of the staffing plan.

Proposed Solution:	
31	That the person whose post is being abolished is advised of such in the five (5) days following the adoption of the staffing plan.

Demand n° 32: Security of Employment in the General & Special Education Sectors

The security of employment mechanism limits the choice that is offered to a displaced employee, and this, without regard for seniority. The available vacant posts don't always fit their needs. We suggest that seniority is put at the heart of the chapter concerning the security of employment sequence.

Proposed Solution:	
32	Review the displacement process.

Demand n° 33: Filling a Post

Some school boards add particular requirements for filling a post. We believe this practice should be better structured. Furthermore, the deadlines to assume the post following a Job Opportunity Circular (Posting) is often too long.

Proposed Solutions:	
33.1	Reduce the amount of time to place an employee in his/her new post ;
33.2	Remove particular requirements.

TARGET 6: ENRICH THE INSURANCE PLAN

Insurance protects employees in the case of a disability. By definition, these employees are physically or psychologically afflicted. Often added to this are financial anxieties and isolation. To foster healing, procedural improvements are needed to manage disabilities while taking into consideration employee situations.

The cost of group insurance is constantly on the rise. In view of this fact, unions have been advocating for a long time in favor of a universal public coverage, to remove the financial burden of private group insurance from staff members. Accordingly, we feel that the cost of the employer's share for the group insurance should be increased.

Demand n° 34: Managing Salary Insurance

The third physician has an important role to play, that is, to resolve a medical dispute between two colleagues. We believe that the choice should not rest in the hands of the professionals between whom the dispute exists but rather decided by a party at the provincial level. Furthermore, considering the person on disability is in a vulnerable situation, we are proposing that changes be made to better protect them.

Proposed Solutions:	
34.1	Incorporate the notion of a third physician to 5-3.38;
34.2	Agree upon a list of physician-arbitrators;
34.3	That the employer covers the cost of the third physician;
34.4	Ensure that the information accessible from the employee's medical dossier is that which pertains to the current disability only;
34.5	That the employer reimburses the cost(s) of all medical notes/certificates;
34.6	Maintain salary while awaiting the decision of the third physician.

Demand n° 35 : Progressive Return

In order to guarantee the best return to work conditions, we are proposing to decrease the time limit whereby an employee can undertake a progressive return to work.

Proposed Solution:	
35	Review the deadline for access to a progressive return to work.

Demand n° 36: Postpone Vacations

Vacation time is a moment for an employee to enjoy and rest with their loved ones. If in the event of a disability during this period, an employee should have the right to postpone the balance of his/her vacations to another time.

Proposed Solution:	
36	Postpone vacation days in the event of a disability.

Demand n° 37: Employer Contribution to the Group Insurance Plan

The cost of insurance has increased immensely throughout several years. In this vein, we believe that the employer's contribution should be increased.

Proposed Solution:	
37	Increase the employer's contribution.

TARGET 7: PROMOTE LABOUR RELATIONS

The decentralization of the School Boards has brought about its share of challenges. Autonomy at the local level and the diverse approaches in management styles have been a major source of conflict and errors in applying the collective agreement. In this context, the word of the employee is important to identify and correct the infringements of the common rules and good practices in human resources management.

Unions have brought complaints and aspirations for greater respect for their members. In this vein, it is through labour relations that we contribute toward constructing healthy work environments, diffusing sources of conflict and finding constructive solutions to problems. Encouraging efficient labour relations is win/win, however, this implies the development of common discussion forums and to demonstrate transparency.

Demand n° 38: Administrative Measures

Contrary to disciplinary measures, there aren't any rules pertaining to administrative measures. Yet, they can, in some cases, lead to dismissal.

The statutory involvement of union officials in the context of administrative measures allows for support and guidance for the employee concerned and to look for solutions in a joint manner. It is also a way to diffuse conflicts before they arise. As well, we believe that forgiveness should also be part of the approach.

Proposed Solution:	
38	Put in place procedures for administrative measures.

Demand n° 39: Leaves for Union Reasons

School Boards have benefitted from the union representative's participation. Promoting labour relations involves offering union representatives optimal conditions in order for them to fill their mandate. Those representatives, who were designated by their members should not be disadvantaged because of their implication.

Proposed Solutions:	
39.1	That the union refunds the union release only if the liberated person was replaced;
39.2	That the union refunds the true cost of the release;
39.3	Provide for a bank of paid releases.

Demand n° 40: National Employment Committee

To respond to the needs and challenges of school boards, we believe that it is important to create a joint permanent national committee charged with studying and bringing necessary modifications to the classification plan.

Proposed Solution:	
40	Put in place a national employment committee.

Demand n° 41: Training and Professional development Parity Committee

The use of funds dedicated to daycare training and professional development should be jointly decided upon during the Training and Professional Development Parity Committee meetings.

Proposed Solution:	
41	That the amount forecasted for daycare training and professional development be decided upon by the Parity Committee.

Demand n° 42: Paid Legal Holidays

For several decades certain School Boards have given extra (other than those outlined in the collective agreement) paid legal holidays. These negotiated benefits should become acquired rights as of the effective date of the next collective agreement.

Proposed Solution:	
42	Revise clause 5-2.03 to allow the renewal of these rights from one collective agreement to another.

Demand n° 43: Salary Pay Stub

Reading and understanding the School Board's pay stub is a challenge to say the least. To understand your pay stub is to ensure the accuracy of your pay and identify possible errors. Along the same line, the deadline to dispute claims should be extended to permit such claims.

Proposed Solutions:	
43.1	Ensure that the pay stub is easy to understand;
43.2	When the School Board makes an error in the pay, it should rectify it and reimburse according to the deadline provided for in the Code.

Demand n° 44 : Protocol

Proposed Solution:	
44	Put in place a return-to-work protocol at the end of the negotiations.

Demand n° 45 : Parity Clause

Proposed Solution:	
45	That the CPNCA commits to automatically applying the higher gains or benefits obtained in the other collective agreements of the education sector or another sector to which these advantages can apply.