

# Quebec daycare workers threaten unlimited strike, federation negotiating<sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online<sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

MONTREAL -- The Federation of Early Childhood Educators resumed negotiations with Quebec on Sunday and was still at the table mid-afternoon Monday, while a threat of unlimited strike loomed among several daycare workers' unions.

On the table were salary issues -- the heart of the negotiations, it's been reported.

The CSQ-affiliated federation of early childhood educators (FIEPQ) has not yet announced a date for a possible unlimited strike by its members, although they voted in favour of a strike mandate last Wednesday.

The union federation said it wanted to give negotiations with government representatives another chance, while still carrying its unlimited strike mandate.

## OTHER WORKERS' WAGES

The wages of "other" workers in the Early Childhood Centres is now at the heart of the dispute.

Premier François Legault said last week that it was normal for support staff in the CPEs to earn a salary comparable to that of the same support staff in the schools.

"Someone who cleans in a school must be paid relatively the same salary as someone who cleans in a daycare. The support staff must have salaries comparable to other support staff in the other networks," said Legault.

However, according to the FIEPQ, these support employees earn much less in the CPEs than in the public sector.

Moreover, FIEPQ is affiliated with the CSQ, the central labour body that represents thousands of these support employees in the schools.

According to the FIEPQ, Quebec City is offering \$19.32 to \$22.59 for food service workers in a CPE, while these workers earn \$26.57 (a single rate) in the public sector.

For a secretary in a CPE, Quebec offers \$17.80 to \$20.18 per hour, according to the FIEPQ. In the public sector, a secretary earns between \$22.18 and \$24.13 per hour, according to the just-signed 2020-2023 collective agreements.

The FIEPQ is asking for \$20.29 to \$23.72 per hour for food managers and \$18.64 to \$21.12 per hour for daycare secretaries.

For educators, Quebec is offering \$21.38 to \$28.31 per hour at the 10th step (the current maximum), but it would like to add two steps to the 10-step scale to bring the 12th step to \$30.03 per hour.

The FIEPQ, in its latest counter-proposal, is asking for \$22.85 to \$30.29 at the 10th step for educators.

## HEALTH FEDERATION TUESDAY

The CSN-affiliated health and social services federation (FSSS) was not at the bargaining table on Monday.

It announced last Friday that its members would begin an unlimited strike starting Wednesday.

The FSSS will be at the bargaining table on Tuesday, the day before its unlimited strike begins.

As for the Syndicat québécois des employés de service (SQEES), affiliated to the FTQ, its last strike votes will be held Tuesday evening. The overall result will not be known until Wednesday.

In the SQEES's case, they're voting on a mandate to strike indefinitely at a time deemed appropriate, which is unknown.

**Region:** Quebec<sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** childcare workforce<sup>[4]</sup>

wages <sup>[5]</sup>

working conditions <sup>[6]</sup>

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