

Quebec daycare workers stage 1-day strike: Protest against slow negotiations closes more than 100 centres ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

More than 100 daycares in Quebec will remain shuttered on Monday as unionized workers stage a one-day strike.

The workers at the publicly funded early childhood centres, or CPEs, have been without a contract for two years.

The centres affected are affiliated with the CSN labour federation.

The union, the province and the employers association have had 20 negotiation meetings, more than half of those attended by a conciliator from the Ministry of Labour, but no agreement has been reached.

At issue are schedules, vacation time planning and easier access to permanent employment for part-time workers.

Union representative Louise Labrie told Radio-Canada that "giant steps" would have to be made to prevent a larger walkout. She said workers are exasperated after years without a contract.

Fifty-three daycares in Montreal are affected by Monday's protest. The other centres are in Laval, Montérégie and Mauricie.

Family Minister Yolande James called the decision to stage the strike premature, saying negotiations are progressing.

"I'm not obviously happy and I don't think that is the right decision," she said.

"They recognize that things are progressing. We're there - the department has been there and will be there 24 hours a day, seven days on seven to make sure that this happens - and just hope that we will get the co-operation we need to make that happen on all sides."

If an agreement isn't reached by the end of the week, the unionized daycare workers say they'll hold a provincewide strike on Friday if the move is supported by the membership.

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Region: Quebec ^[2]

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