



For immediate release

PRESS RELEASE

A major FPSES-CSQ victory for working students in the college sector!

Montreal, April 13, 2016. – The Fédération du personnel de soutien de l'enseignement supérieur (FPSES-CSQ), affiliated with the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ), is pleased to announce that it has concluded an important agreement that puts an end to a discriminatory measure that penalized thousands of student employees, particularly between 2007 and 2015.

The FPSES-CSQ president, Anne Dionne, pointed out that in 2007, twenty-two student employees, members of Cégep de Sherbrooke's support staff union, affiliated with the Fédération, filed a complaint with the Pay Equity Commission (now known as the CNESST). They were denouncing their being excluded from coverage under the Pay Equity Act. Moreover, they were receiving lower wages than those given other employees performing the same functions without any valid justifications.

"For close to ten years, the FPSES-CSQ, with the CSQ's support, has spared no effort to get justice for these students as well as all discriminated Quebec student employees", explained Anne Dionne.

An agreement that puts an end to discrimination

From the outset, the Commission agreed with the complainants by indicating to the parties that the Pay Equity Act had to be applied to student employees. From that moment, the parties began a conciliation process. "Last December, we finally concluded an agreement with the Treasury Board that will eliminate this wage discrimination which has existed for far too many years. Lump sum payments will be given to student employees who were penalized by this discriminatory measure between 2007 and 2015, throughout the entire college sector", added the FPSES-CSQ president.

A call to all former student employees

However, the 2007 complaint must be officially withdrawn by the Cégep de Sherbrooke's twenty-two signatories for this agreement to be implemented.

"For that reason, we, the FPSES-CSQ, are asking them to get in touch with us as soon as possible at the following email address: equite_salariale@fpses.org. We are also appealing to the thousands of students affected by this measure to keep an eye out for public notices that will eventually be issued in each region to inform them of the procedures that must be followed to claim the lump sum payments for discriminated student employees. This includes student

employees performing administrative or technical tasks, as well as those who were animators, activities leaders or lifeguards. They will need to contact the Cegep where they studied and worked,” indicated Anne Dionne.

A great victory for justice

It must be noted that once this agreement is implemented, all college sector student employees will be paid the salary rate or the first level of the salary scale of the employment class for which they will be hired, retroactive to December 2015.

“I am very proud of this exemplary battle which was led by the FPSES and the CSQ. This victory has not only brought justice to our members but to all affected Quebec students, regardless of the union they belong to. The fight against discrimination is a major concern for the FPSES-CSQ. And this is all the more true when discrimination affects those most vulnerable amongst the salaried workers, as was the case in this instance. That is why we never let down our guard, even though this fight was long and difficult. But when the cause is just, sooner or later, we end up winning.”

Launching of a video

As a final point, it should also be noted that the FPSES-CSQ is launching an informative video today regarding this important victory. The president, Anne Dionne, provides an update on this matter. To see the video, please follow this link: <https://youtu.be/CiYKhhgUAZU> .

FPSES-CSQ profile

The FPSES-CSQ represents close to 5,000 members working in thirteen establishments in the college sector, three in the university sector and four organizations that provide education services. It is an affiliate of the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) which represents more than 200,000 members, of which nearly 130,000 work in the education sector. The CSQ is the most significant labour organization in the field of education in Quebec.

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