



Fédération des professionnelles et
professionnels de l'éducation
du Québec (CSQ)

Press release

Abolishment of school boards

The FPPE warns that exceptional students would be the ones who would lose the most

Montréal, November 20, 2011 - The Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec (FPPE-CSQ) warns parents of students with disabilities, social maladjustment or learning disabilities (EHDA - Special Needs Students) that their children are at risk of being among the ones with the most to lose under any policy designed to abolish or seriously weaken school boards.

Taking advantage of the Education Professionals' Week held from November 21 to 25, 2011, the president of the FPPE, Mr. Jean Falardeau, argues that the abolishment of school boards would jeopardize the professional services offered to students rather than improve them.

"A few months ago, a survey conducted by the CROP firm clearly indicated that the majority of parents of special needs students were calling for an increase in professional services in schools. Unfortunately, the consequences brought on by the disappearance of the school boards are totally contrary to this plea made by the parents of Quebec", says Mr. Falardeau

A misleading or foolish mirage?

The president of FPPE criticizes François Legault and those who advocate abolishment of the school boards for creating a shimmering mirage in the eyes of the people by implying that fewer school boards would mean more services in schools.

"With larger budgets than those that the schools would have, the school boards do not currently have sufficient means to hire the number of professionals that would be required to meet all of the needs of students with disabilities, social maladjustment and learning disabilities. How can one claim that by sprinkling this same budget amongst 2795 schools, each one would then be able to offer more professional services to exceptional students than is currently the case? It's either a huge lie or great foolishness, but one thing is certain: the parents of these students must be told the truth", declares Jean Falardeau.

Schools even more vulnerable in terms of professional services

Mr. Jean Falardeau adds that the enormity of what we are supposed to swallow hook, line and sinker is even more obvious when you realize that of the 2795

primary and secondary schools in Quebec, 1000 of them have fewer than 200 students, 715 of which have less than 100 students.

"It's not hard to picture how vulnerable professional services would be in these schools, which would no longer be able to count on the strength in numbers of a school board, and would have to rely on the supplementary budgetary crumbs that they would receive once the budget of the abolished school boards has been divvied up. These schools would no longer have the means to pay for the professional services that their students enjoy under the current system", reveals the president of the FPPE.

A Tower of Babel atmosphere

Mr. Jean Falardeau further maintains that it is easy to anticipate the real Tower of Babel atmosphere that would reign in the schools in terms of professional services in the aftermath of the disappearance of school boards.

"Many schools would still be responsible for guaranteeing professional services for students with special needs, but they would no longer be able to do so. Their administrations would be forced to talk amongst themselves in the attempt to come to agreements that would be wiped out by the government itself through abolishment of the school boards. Administrations would then be forced to dedicate a lot of their energy to trying to fix the new administrative problems created and have even less time available to look after the students, contrary to what they would have us believe", says Mr. Jean Falardeau, indignantly.

Profiles of the FPPE and the CSQ

The Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec (FPPE-CSQ) represents 20 unions that have 6800 members distributed through nearly all of Quebec's French, English, Cree and Kativik school boards. Among its members it has different categories of employees in the areas of administration, teaching and direct services for students (including psychologists, psychoeducators, speech-language pathologists, guidance counsellors, remedial teachers, spiritual living and community involvement facilitators).

The CSQ represents more than 180,000 members, of which 100,000 are educational personnel. It is the largest union in education in Quebec. The CSQ is also present in the sectors of health and social, day care, municipal, recreation, culture, community and communications services.

– 30 –

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