

CSQ

MAGAZINE

SEXUALITY ON SCHOOL BENCHES

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We are all committed to our workplaces and we all want to do a good job. Even though we may work in different sectors, the challenges we face are essentially the same: overwork, insecurity, lack of recognition, etc.



Photo Jean-François Leblanc

It is for this reason that we embark on a Congress year¹ in which collective action will be at the heart of our considerations. Collective action is working together to find solutions and restoring meaning to our work. It's sharing a feeling of responsibility. The strength of this solidarity helps lighten our load. When we get involved in our union, we gain the power to act locally. We also become stakeholders in an organization that acts globally to change the face of our society, making it more just and equal.

We proved it again this past year. I think particularly of CPE negotiations; improvements in the Québec Pension Plan, which we demanded and received; and our continued mobilization for a \$15 minimum wage. Our next challenge will be to convince employers and the government to do more as well.

Let's face it, our difficult working conditions are in large part the result of the liberal government's austerity measures over the last three years. 2018 is an election year and it's not because we aren't currently in negotiations that we will stop defending issues that are important to us. We need to remind politicians who aspire to lead Québec that they shoulder heavy responsibilities and duties towards public sector workers.

For the coming year, I wish us all employers who acknowledge the expertise and professional autonomy of public sector workers, and who provide us with the means for healthier work environments. The privatization of public services needs to stop immediately and we need to remember that investing in public services benefits the entire population. Here's hoping this message finds its way.

Louise Chabot | PRESIDENT

¹ The CSQ's 42nd Congress will be held June 26 to 29, 2018.

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NEW SCHOOLS EMERGING

School buildings are aging and they require renovations. The rising number of students calls for new buildings. Now is a good time to rethink our schools.

François Beauregard | COLLABORATION

Completing such work requires knowledge of the state of the building stock, designing and planning projects, overseeing construction sites and establishing adequate maintenance programs, while taking into account the needs of the occupants and the technical requirements.

Such tasks present challenges that many education staff members meet by engaging in innovation. School boards, in striving to attain their objectives, have called on internal expertise by hiring, among others, engineers, architects and building technicians. Sometimes, teachers get also involved in the adventure.

Jérémie Harnois¹ is an engineer with the Commission scolaire de la Rivière-du-Nord. He believes that it is essential that his employer have the most precise overview possible of the building stock, in order to be able to establish priorities and obtain adequate funding from the government.

For the mechanical engineering specialist, the quality of buildings also has an impact on educational success. It is important to create living environments where concern is shown for air quality, natural lighting and the appropriate management of space.

¹ Jérémie Harnois is a member of the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation de Laurentides-Lanaudière (SPPELL-CSQ)



Photo François Beauregard

Jérémie Harnois

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Asked about what motivates him at work, Jérémie Harnois explains that when he enters a school, he always wonders whether he would send his own children there. If the answer is no, he and his team tackles what is wrong.

In his view, the lowest bidder is not necessarily the best principle, because future maintenance costs must be taken into account. "In the field of building, long-term planning is essential. Energy costs are a major factor to be considered," he points out. That is why some 15 geothermal heating projects were implemented in his school board.

Factoring in sustainable development is part of his life philosophy. He believes that the ideal schools of the future will have several features: they will use passive solar heating, they will provide good lighting, they will be equipped with air conditioning, they will reuse rainwater for toilets and they will have green spaces in school yards. "Comfort, energy savings, and respect for the environment are not incompatible. All that is needed is will and the necessary resources," he says.

DESIGN FOCUSED ON USERS' NEEDS

Laetitia Laborde² has been an architect at the Commission scolaire Marie-Victorin for six years. She deeply appreciates her professional autonomy. She is responsible for project management, the design of plans and specifications, the supervision of work sites, the design of interiors, and the layout and furnishing of spaces. Her tasks are diverse and that is one reason she loves her work.

The infectiously enthusiastic architect believes that being attentive to the needs of users is of the utmost importance. "My priority is children," she says. "It is essential to improve their environment. Studies show that an attractive space plays a major role in stimulating children's awareness and fostering learning. We can design spaces to reflect ergonomic and aesthetic concerns at reasonable cost. All that's needed is a little imagination."

Reducing the environmental footprint is a concern in all new buildings where geothermal fields are installed. The window arrangement based on sunlight also helps reduce energy consumption, as does LED lighting. She is proud to be part of a team that innovates and is preparing to build the first three-level wood structure school in North America!

Photo François Beaugard



² Laetitia Laborde is a member of the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels de la Montérégie (SPPM-CSQ)

“The ideal school is above all a place that meets the needs of users. Whether we build a new school or renovate an old one, understanding the teaching practices, the composition of classes and school activities allows us to design spaces and furnishings that are appropriate for new ways of doing things.”

Laetitia Laborde and her colleagues consult teaching, maintenance and technical personnel during project development, which makes a real difference. Unlike private-sector projects, where the considerations of the school team are not a priority, this kind of collaboration anticipates and curtails potential problems with the maintenance and use of facilities at the source.

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

The renovation and maintenance of schools are also essential to quality of life and avoiding unnecessary expenses. A leaking roof can be very costly if repairs are not done in time. That is one of the responsibilities of Mario Girard³, a building technician at the Commission scolaire des Rives-du-Saguenay.

Working with engineers and architects, he inspects roofs, estimates cost of work, and updates the physical data of buildings and evacuation plans. He also participates in innovative projects like the construction of a wood structure gymnasium and installing heat recovery units in walls.

Mario Girard is part of a team of technicians who share their skills in areas associated with architecture, heating and civil engineering. “The school building stock in the school board is well maintained, over all. We are proactive. We try to anticipate problems. We favour regional products and we help complete some really nice projects,” he says, with pride.

In his view, one of the challenges is to make sure the work is completed according to schedule to avoid any disturbance of school activities.

ENERGY SAVINGS

Teachers also lead cutting-edge projects. That is the case for Nicolas Busque⁴, science teacher in Valcourt. His dream is to make his school the first carbon neutral secondary school in Québec.

A few years ago, he got his students involved in an evaluation of greenhouse gases. “We realized that we were producing a lot and that we had to reduce our emissions. Members of the school team worked with me to put in place concrete actions. The students also planted oak trees near the school, and even at home,” he points out. What’s more, students in a master’s environmental studies program at the Université de Sherbrooke based their work on his studies on greenhouse gas emissions and produced similar results.



Mario Girard

³ Mario Girard is a member of the Syndicat du personnel de soutien de la Jonquière (SPSSJ-CSQ)

⁴ Nicolas Busque is a member of the Syndicat de l'enseignement de l'Estrie (SEE-CSQ)

After examining a variety of solutions for reducing the École Odyssee's environmental footprint, Nicolas Busque, with help from his father Laurier Busque, developed a passive solar heating wall that received support from the school board and for which he won a grant. The wall is now in operation and his students regularly evaluate the energy that has been saved. Since the project was implemented, they have reduced GHG emissions by 5 tons.

"Parents enrol their children at our school because of our educational project," he proudly says. For the ardent defender of sustainable development, the schools of tomorrow must educate eco-citizens: people who are involved in their communities and who are aware of environmental issues. With the support of the school administration, pedagogical counselors and his colleagues, he is organizing a conference on the theme of environmental education to be held next spring.



Nicolas Busque

Photo Stéphane Lemire

A COMMUNITY THAT LIKES TO GET INVOLVED

Richard Bergevin⁵ recognizes the exceptional commitment of Nicolas Busque. "In Estrie, people are creative. A few years ago, some well-intentioned teachers, with the help of volunteers, designed mezzanines in certain classrooms to create a reading space. The project was very successful. The structures had to be dismantled, however, because they did not comply with the building code. It created disappointment."

He believes that if engineers and architects had been associated with the project from the outset, the problem likely would have been avoided.

Richard Bergevin would like to see the solutions formulated by teachers given greater consideration in construction projects. He is not opposed to ideas for schools of the future from outside sources, such as proposed by the Education Minister with the Lab-École project.

"If the Lab-École project has given rise to a societal debate about the importance of providing quality school infrastructures that are in good condition, then that's positive. On the other hand, greater consideration should be given to the innovative ideas of school staff and their expertise should be more fully recognized, as should the added value of having specialized personnel in the school system. All of the school boards should adopt this path to make sure that such projects truly reflect the needs of students and the people who practise education in everyday life," he concludes.



Richard Bergevin

Photo Jocelyn Bernier

VICTIMS OF HYPERSEXUALIZATION

Children between the ages of 10 and 12 years old called “sluts” or “fags”. Boys asking young girls for “blow jobs”. Young people posting nude photos of themselves on social media. It’s a sad reality.

Félix Cauchy-Charest | CSQ ADVISOR

“Early sexualisation is not a rare phenomenon. It affects children exposed to explicit images of adult sexuality before they’re ready to deal with sexuality from a psychological, emotional, and physical standpoint,” says Francine Duquet¹.

Highly suggestive images are everywhere: advertising, reality shows, music videos, and video games. This excessive exposure to sexually explicit messages can have various repercussions, such as poor body image, gender stereotypes, pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, etc.

Teachers and parents need to help children make sense of these messages. “We forget that we sometimes treat children as teenagers, and teenagers as adults,” she adds.

In addition to discussing sexuality honestly, positively, and carefully, sex education should allow children to develop their own ability to judge, discriminate, and consent.

TOOLS FOR SCHOOL

It’s in this context that the professor developed a prevention program against early sexualisation for stakeholders working with children in grades 5 and 6 in school, community, and health and social services organizations.



The *On est encore des enfants!* program was validated by teachers and interveners before being tried in the classroom. “Discussion groups found that many interveners felt ill-equipped to talk about sexuality with the kids,” notes Francine Duquet.

The program (offered in French) addresses six themes and proposes different educational activities to do in class or at home:

- *Being a child or a teenager?*
- *Friendships and popularity*
- *Media, stereotypes, and sexually explicit images*
- *The desire to please and awakening of love*
- *Sexual vocabulary and harassment*
- *Social media, internet, and sexuality*

To learn more, visit hypersexualisation.uqam.ca.

¹ Francine Duquet is sexologist and professor in the department of sexology at UQAM.

A WOMAN WITH A HEART OF GOLD

Every day, she takes care of the most vulnerable students. Meet a remarkable person whose work is among the most important.

Martin Cayouette | FPSS-CSQ ADVISOR

Suzanne Desfossés¹ is an attendant for handicapped students who diligently watches over their needs. “In this line of work, we always need to be ready for emergencies. On some days there are none, and on other days there are a dozen! It’s never the same. We need to be able to manage our stress without it ever showing.”

This mindset is what helps play down many situations. “No matter what hap-

pens, for every problem there is a solution. Every day is different and that’s what I love about it!”

THE STUDENTS COME FIRST

Among her duties, she watches over the welfare of the students, their hygiene, and their safety. In school, some kids sometimes soil their pants. She refers to this as an accident because they don’t mean

to do it. “What’s important is that the student be at the centre of the intervention, be treated with dignity, and feel good and comfortable,” she says.

FULL DAYS

She regularly accompanies the students a long way, from morning until late afternoon. Suzanne Desfossés summarizes a typical day:

“In the morning, I welcome a student and accompany them to the bathroom. Then, I follow them to class to help with educational activities. And when something unexpected happens in school, I intervene with any other student who needs help.”

On the eve of retirement, she still loves her job. “Working with children is very rewarding. Because they’re always smiling, we tend to forget our own worries. They’re my little rays of sunshine!”

¹ Suzanne Desfossés is a member of the Syndicat du soutien scolaire de la Riveraine (CSQ). She works at the Commission scolaire de la Riveraine.



Photo Éric Massicotte

Suzanne Desfossés

THE POWER OF ONE VOICE

Upset following a decision made by the Québec government affecting student financial aid in cégeps, a student life advisor reached out to Minister David. This is the story a great victory against injustice.

Simon Lavigne
CSQ ADVISOR

The announcement dropped like a bombshell. In May 2015, access to “profile 3”, which enables quick responses to financial aid applications, was removed from cégep financial aid offices. At the time, the goal of the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur was to centralize resources to cut costs.

For Monique Lussier¹, it was the beginning of a nightmare. As a student life advisor at Cégep Marie-Victorin, she quickly assessed the damage.

“Access to ‘profile 3’ allowed us to provide direct local responses fast. But everything changed after the decision of the ministry. Treatment delays increased to several weeks, which put the most vulnerable students in highly precarious situations,” she says.

“Because of the programs it offers and its location, the students who attend Cégep Marie-Victorin are mostly from lower socio-economic backgrounds and have particular needs. Quick access to financial aid is therefore crucial. I felt powerless to help. But my union involvement helped keep me sane. It really saved me!”, continues Monique Lussier.



Photo: Jean-François Leblanc

Monique Lussier

¹ Monique Lussier is president of the Syndicat du personnel professionnel du Cégep Marie-Victorin, affiliated with the Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges (FPPC-CSQ) since 2015.

SEIZING AN OPPORTUNITY

In December 2016, she seized the opportunity to speak to Minister David during a visit to the cégep. “As an activist, I requested that the minister see the collateral damage from the decision for herself. It is the most vulnerable who are the most affected, that is, immigrant or single parent women who have decided to go back to school,” she explains.

It was clear that Minister David was not aware of the situation, and her representatives were surprised by Monique Lussier’s gesture. “She was visibly shaken. Following our exchange, we kept in touch, notably through a letter explaining the extent of the problem,” Monique Lussier adds.

Her action caused a snowball effect. Five months later, the student financial aid office at Cégep Marie-Victorin regained access to “profile 3”, and the student life advisor reclaimed her pride in her job: to meet the needs of the students.

AN EAR FOR MACHINES

How many people do you know who are able to detect a mechanical trouble in an engine room just by hearing the sound it makes?

Félix Cauchy-Charest
CSQ ADVISOR

Meet stationary engineer Luc Lalancette¹ who works in this little known area at the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

Every day, he makes sure that everyone has a sound learning and working environment. He conducts a daily tour of the engine rooms to verify that the ventilation, air conditioning, and heating systems are all working properly.

"A hot water heating system can be challenging in my line of work. Just imagine: every office and classroom in the university has a valve and a motor. The cooperation of personnel and students is essential!" he says.

Because one simply cannot turn off the heating and ventilation system in this type of establishment, maintenance is conducted twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, when there is less activity on campus.

NEITHER SEEN NOR HEARD

It's often said that support personnel in higher education work behind the scenes to perform essential duties. Luc Lalancette's job is a perfect example.

"Sometimes, the system stops unexpectedly. I remember one particular Saturday in winter, when it was -25 °C. There was no way the professors and students could return on Monday without any heating! After 15 hours of looking, I finally found and repaired the issues with the gas and fresh air intake that were at the root of the problem. On Monday morning, the classrooms were once again warm and comfortable," he says proudly.

A PARTICULAR CHALLENGE

The university has campuses in Rouyn-Noranda, Val-d'Or, Amos, Notre-Dame-du-Nord, as well as in Lac Duparquet (Research and teaching forest).

"It's a large territory to cover. I need to travel to every location to perform maintenance and respond to emergencies. It's not always easy with the weather. At the beginning of November, I had to go to Amos for an emergency. It had snowed a lot and the van didn't have winter tires ... But that's Abitibi!" he concludes philosophically.



Photo Christian Leduc

Luc Lalancette

¹ Luc Lalancette is a member of the Syndicat du personnel de soutien de l'Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue, affiliated with the FPSES-CSQ.

GROWING TO THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Musician Carlos Marcelo Martinez¹ blends his life as a musical performer with his work as a home childcare provider.

Christopher Young | FIPEQ-CSQ ADVISOR

Thirteen years ago, he opened a subsidized home childcare centre in Saint-Jérôme, to pass on his passion for music to young children.



Photos François Beaugregard

"In my home country, Argentina, I was a music teacher for children 3 to 5 years old. When I arrived in Québec, I gave music workshops, but I found it difficult to travel from one place to another, selling my services. However, I got to know the business. So I decided to open my own childcare centre to teach my own group of kids and continue to do what I love," he says.

Although the activities in his centre are varied, music plays a key role in his approach with the little ones under his care.

"The atmosphere is creative, musical. Nearly every day we improvise songs, play instruments, such as small guitars or indigenous South American instruments. Children can learn everything through music. It's a great starting point for virtually any learning," he says.

ON TOUR DURING HIS HOLIDAYS

In addition to caring for little ones, Carlos Marcelo Martinez continues his musical career, playing mostly near his home and

planning longer tours during his annual holidays. "On statutory holidays, I book smaller tours, such as in Abitibi."

Parents appreciate his musical approach to teaching. In fact, his clientele usually find him through word of mouth. "Often, parents find my being an artist who plays in front of a public an advantage. Plus, when parents come to visit my daycare, I always introduce them to my family. I believe it's important. It shows the type of person I am," he adds.

APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE

Despite his success, Carlos Marcelo Martinez worries about the future of his subsidized home childcare because of the opening of new and much larger private daycares.

"Many home childcare centres like mine are closing or are in danger of closing. Yet, I don't believe the larger private daycares can offer the same quality of service as we do," he concludes.

¹ Carlos Marcelo Martinez is a member of the Alliance des intervenantes en milieu familial Laurentides (ADIM Laurentides-CSQ).

WELL-FED TODDLERS

Preparing meals and snacks for a hundred or so toddlers can be quite a challenge. Getting them to eat everything - and enjoy it - is an achievement. Here is the portrait of an exceptional cook.

Christopher Young | FIPEQ-CSQ ADVISOR

The only cook at CPE Les Amis Gators, Joël Bourgeois¹ prepares every meal and snack himself, from A to Z, for approximately 98 children in two centres in Saint-Hyacinthe and La Présentation.

"Although I do buy crackers, I make everything else myself. Even the bread!" he explains. This allows him to guarantee the quality of the food and save money.

"When you start making your own food, you realize that it's much cheaper than buying ready-made products. Take the bread for example, it can accompany any dish or be eaten as a snack that the kids love. Plus, this way, we know exactly what goes into plates: no additives or preservatives," he says.

A VARIED MENU

Rotated every three or four weeks, weekly menus need to be varied. For Joël Bourgeois, this means one fish dish, one egg dish, and one vegetarian dish every week.

A dish that's surprisingly popular is Asian macaroni with tofu. It's on the winter menu rotation. "The kids look forward to winter for that meal!," he says.

Contrary to what we may think, kids don't need to be pushed to try foods outside their culinary comfort zones. "Sometimes, they're even less hesitant than their educators when it comes to trying to new things!"



A SOURCE OF PRIDE

The children who attend Les Amis Gators really enjoy the person in charge of their meals. "Some parents tell us their kids don't even eat at home, and they tell their parents to 'make it like Joël!,'" he says.

But to those parents who struggle to get their kids to try new foods, Joël Bourgeois puts things in perspective: "I'm more successful at work than at home with my two teenagers!"

¹ Joël Bourgeois is a member of the Syndicat des intervenantes en petite enfance de Montréal (SIPEM-CSQ).

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION SOON ON THE INTERNET

The digitization of health information is increasing around the world. Québec is no exception.

Lise Goulet | CSQ ADVISOR

The Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) launched, in December 2017, a new online application: the Québec Health Booklet. Although it seems like an interesting idea on the surface, this new tool raises many questions.

For those who want it, the Québec Health Booklet will provide access to your lists of medications, and the results of clinical and medical analyses, as long as they've been input in your Québec Health Record. Other sections, such as physician's notes, registration to find a family physician, and the Québec Medical Appointment Scheduler, will complete the application.

Unless prohibited by the courts, parents can activate and access their child's (under the age of 14) health booklet. For incapacitated individuals judged, power of attorney and legal guardianship mechanisms will need to be respected.

A pilot project will be launched in Québec City and Laval in January 2018. The official launch is planned for April 2018. Specific applications for organ donations, for example, could complete the project, which will gradually be implemented until 2021.

A RECOGNIZED RISK

Despite stringent security measures in place, on December 4 the CSQ and the Fédération de la santé du Québec (FSQ-CSQ) met with RAMQ officials, who admitted that although the systems could be hacked, they would be ready to act fast. Definitely something to think about ...

WHAT'S YOUR PRICE?

Besides better access to health information and improved planning of medical visits, the Québec Health Booklet would also promote a self-care approach in which the "patient-partner" plays a more active role. The government might even consider indicating the costs of each care episode. Why? To raise patient awareness? Or to gradually implement procedure-based financing?

"No one goes to the emergency room or doctor's for fun. This type of practice would only result in feelings of guilt, even discrimination," says Sonia Éthier¹.

VIGILANCE IS NEEDED

A variety of questions have been addressed to the RAMQ, notably with regards to evaluating the access procedures that aim to control risks and the obligation to declare security incidents to the Commission d'accès à l'information.

Invited to collaborate with the RAMQ, the CSQ and FSQ-CSQ will consider these issues. One thing is for certain, the government's management policies need to be closely monitored.

¹ Sonia Éthier is vice-president of the CSQ.

GREAT INTEREST IN EVERYTHING DIGITAL

The world of education is increasingly digital. More than 9000 members expressed their views on the subject.

France Bernier and
Matthieu Pelard | CSQ ADVISORS

The high number of respondents to the CSQ's research reflects the tremendous interest school network and higher education personnel have in the subject.

The research focused on three issues : the changes in practices as a result of digital technology, the impact on the work environment, and the need for training. Although a detailed analysis of the questionnaires is still underway, at the time of writing, preliminary observations have been made.

Members are highly in favour of using digital tools in their work. As these technologies transform their tasks, the impact on their professional working conditions varies.

Improvements come mainly in terms of collaboration, communication, and inter-professional support. However, the intensification of these exchanges also brings

up the risk of blurring the lines between one's professional and personal life.

THE NEED FOR TRAINING

Besides basic training or discovering new digital tools, questionnaire respondents expressed the need to improve their digital skills as they relate to their work.

This research is being conducted just as the Québec government is launching its digital strategy. The CSQ will ensure the concerns expressed by its members are taken into consideration by the government.

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