



# Our bargaining priorities

**Since we won the right to collective bargaining in 2009, the quest for full equity with our comparator job (early childhood educators in CPEs) has been at the core of our demands. It's not just a question of recognizing the value of our work as home educational childcare providers (RSGEs), it's also a matter of justice.**

In this new bargaining round, equity with the comparator job is key. The system is at a crossroads. Between 2018 and 2022, Quebec lost more than 24,000 home childcare spaces. Although the number of RSGEs has rebounded slightly, there remains a great deal to be done to stabilize it.

At the same time, the CAQ government promised, in its "Grand chantier pour les familles," to create 37,000 additional subsidized places in the system by 2025-2026.

If it is to halt the exodus of experienced RSGEs and succeed in recruiting new ones, the government must do better. It has to offer us decent conditions that reflect the current realities of the job market and the economy. These conditions must also be commensurate with our responsibilities as professionals.

This document provides a wealth of information about the bargaining priorities that emerged from the consultations with you and your colleagues: nearly 3,000 RSGEs in all. It will help you understand the priorities and take ownership of them.

## Solidarity!



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### Lexicon

Fixed APSS days = statutory holidays

Non-fixed APSS days = vacations



## Include the comparator job in the collective agreement

Our latest battle to achieve income equity with the comparator job is under way. In February 2022, we succeeded in obtaining a letter of agreement that made CPE unqualified educators at echelon 3 our comparator job.

A few months later, the salary for the comparator job was increased under the new CPE collective agreement. Unfortunately, our remuneration was still based on the old salary scale as there is no mechanism for raising it automatically.

After more than 10 years of fighting for the fundamental principle of equity, things must change. The future of home-based educational childcare depends on it.

### OUR DEMAND

We demand that the comparator job be written into the collective agreement. So, when the CPE collective agreement is renewed, the remuneration of home educational childcare providers (RSGEs) will automatically increase in line with that of the comparator job.



## Create a pension plan

With the current labour shortage, many employers are investing in a pension plan to attract and retain employees, even in small and medium-sized businesses.

Public sector employees have had such a plan for a long time. The government refuses to give us one, hiding behind the argument that we are self-employed.

In reality, we have very little autonomy in the management of our daycare centres. We're government workers, with all the disadvantages that go with that but with few of the advantages.

The ministère de la Famille would like to increase the number of subsidized places in the early childhood system. A pension plan would encourage young workers to join the system and stay for the long term. Being a home educational childcare provider (RSGE) must no longer be seen as a transitional job.

It's unacceptable that we work hard for our entire working lives and don't have a nest egg when the time comes to enjoy a well-deserved retirement.

### OUR DEMAND

We demand the creation of a pension plan specifically for regulated and subsidized RSGEs.



## Keep the full parental contribution

Few people are aware that home educational childcare providers do not receive the full \$9.10 per child per day paid by the parents. In fact, \$2.10 of that amount goes to the ministère de la Famille. When the time comes to announce an increase in the parental contribution, the government is careful not to mention this fact.

The vast majority of parents mistakenly believe that the increases stay in the pockets of their RSGE. But that is not what happens! The money is in fact a disguised tax for the parents.

At the end of the month, this \$2.10 per child per day adds up to \$252 diverted to the government. If we had this money, it would help offset part of our rising operating costs, such as for groceries and materials.

### OUR DEMAND

We demand to be paid the full amount of the parental contribution instead of sending some of it to the Conseil du trésor.

This demand relates to article 12.09 of the collective agreement.



## Be able to choose our holidays and not be forced to make up holidays

Whether it's December 26, Easter Monday or July 1, we need to be able to move statutory holidays to accommodate parents' needs.

For example, when July 1 falls in the middle of the week, it would suit families better if we closed on Friday or Monday instead and let them use our services on the midweek day.

In the case of December 26, many parents who work on that day need our services. We could move that holiday to January 2 instead. It's all a question of respecting our autonomy so we can meet our clients' needs.

On the other hand, some home educational childcare providers (RSGEs) choose to work a four-day week. This means they are closed on Friday or Monday.

When a statutory holiday falls on a weekend, these providers are forced to close on the last working day of the week to make up the holiday. Being closed on two days of the week inconveniences parents.

### OUR DEMANDS

We demand that we no longer be forced to take certain statutory holidays.

We demand that RSGEs not be forced to make up this holiday. They should not be penalized for choosing a schedule that facilitates work-life balance. The important thing is to stay within the maximum number of working days.

These two demands relate to article 13.05 of the collective agreement, as well as Instruction #11.



## Receive an experience recognition premium

Virtually everywhere in the job market, employers base their salary scales on seniority. This is a way of recognizing experience and retaining workers with essential expertise. In fact, this practice already exists in the comparator job (unqualified CPE educator, echelon 3).

### OUR DEMAND

We therefore demand a triennial recognition premium for regulated and subsidized home educational childcare providers to recognize their knowledge and prevent the system from losing experienced providers.



## Have more money in our pockets

In recent years, inflation and rising living costs have cut into family incomes. We're not immune to this phenomenon – far from it!

Every day, we need to provide nutritious meals and snacks based on Canada's Food Guide. In 2022 alone, the cost of a basket of groceries jumped by 10%, a 40-year high! Not to mention the cost of purchasing materials for the children, which increases sharply every year.

When we divide the amount left in our pockets by all the hours worked, we realize to our dismay that we are working for less than the minimum wage to provide quality services that support the development of children during the critical 0–5-year period.

### OUR DEMAND

Our income must increase annually to stop our impoverishment and improve our purchasing power. We demand that the collective agreement include an "enrichment clause" based on the consumer price index.





## Add the equivalent of five days financial compensation

At present, we have the right to just one personal day off with financial compensation. In view of our increasing workload, it's reasonable that we should have days off during the year on top of our annual vacation days (our non-fixed days without subsidized service provision, or APSS days).

### OUR DEMAND

We therefore demand the addition of five more non-fixed APSS days, with no obligation to close. This last requirement is very important. If we are to meet the needs of our clients and remain competitive with other childcare services, such as daycare centres, we need to limit the number of days when we are forced to close.



## Increase leave not subject to the 20% replacement limit

According to the collective agreement and the Educational Childcare Regulation, we can use the services of a replacement for up to 20% of the total number of days our service is open in one year, or the equivalent of 47 days for a service that is open 5 days a week.

### OUR DEMAND

In order to promote work-life balance for home educational childcare providers, we demand that the service not be subject to the 20% replacement limit when the home educational childcare provider is replaced for maternity, paternity, parental, or sick leave or any other situation provided for in article 15 of the collective agreement.

This demand also relates to section 81.1 of the Educational Childcare Regulation.



## Get paid for training time

The ministère de la Famille requires us to take six hours of refresher training per year. In addition, our cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training must be renewed every three years.

On an annual basis, these training requirements are equivalent to eight hours of training for each provider. The training sessions have to take place in the evenings and on weekends to avoid closing our service and inconveniencing our clients. These hours are added to our already busy workweek.

These training hours also represent a challenge in terms of work-life balance.

### OUR DEMAND

We therefore demand the equivalent of eight hours of paid training time per year.

This demand relates to article 8 of the collective agreement.



## **Increase the number of meetings of the provincial committee on home childcare issues**

The Comité national sur les enjeux de la garde en milieu familial meets twice a year, at six-month intervals. The committee is made up of representatives from the Ministère de la Famille, the Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux (FSSS-CSN) and the associations of coordinating offices.

Given the quantity and importance of the issues to be addressed, it is impossible for this committee to make progress on these issues in just two meetings per year.

## **Increase the number of RSGEs eligible for union leave**

At present, the number of home educational childcare providers who are eligible for union leave to allow them to hold a position within the CSN movement is limited to four. However, over the past few years, the number of RSGEs within the CSN has increased significantly, as have the related issues. It is therefore necessary to review this provision to enable more providers to become involved in the union movement as a whole so they can raise awareness of conditions in this sector and advance the issues that concern them.

### **OUR DEMANDS**

Consequently, we demand that the committee meet at least eight times a year.

We demand that eight people be granted union leave to take up a position within the CSN.

This demand relates to article 6 of the collective agreement.



## Introduce a transition allowance for children 18-24 months old

Children between the ages of 18 and 24 months require a great deal of supervision, but less than infants. This phase in a child's development has many challenges in the various spheres of learning, such as the acquisition of motor, language, cognitive and socio-affective skills.

What's more, during this period, children go through an important stage of socialization, which carries its own set of challenges, and requires well-targeted actions aimed at fostering social development. For all these reasons, they require more special attention than children over 24 months of age.

### OUR DEMAND

We therefore demand a transition allowance for this 18–24 month period.



## Ministerial contribution to group insurance plan

As providers of regulated and subsidized home educational childcare services (RSGEs), we are required by the government to take out group insurance.

However, such private insurance comes at a high cost, which is increasing every year.

On the other hand, group insurance saves the government money, since it replaces much of the coverage provided by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ).

### OUR DEMAND

We demand that an extraordinary premium be paid to regulated, subsidized RSGEs who carry group insurance. For non-regulated services, this premium will act as an incentive to join the system and stay in it.



## Receive special compensation for children leaving at short notice

We understand that parents must have a choice of childcare options for their children and their situation may change over time. Unfortunately, we all too often find out that a child will be departing only at the last minute.

In many cases, it can take weeks or even months to replace that child. This unpredictable situation results in a monetary loss for our service and has a direct impact on our family income.

### OUR DEMAND

We demand a special compensation for home educational childcare providers to make up for the loss of income resulting from a child's sudden departure.



## Adjust compensation for benefits

Part of our remuneration consists of 20.434% to compensate for benefits such as group insurance, pension plan, Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST), Québec Pension Plan, Québec Parental Insurance Plan and the Fonds des services de santé (FSS). The percentages for each plan may vary from year to year.

### OUR DEMAND

We demand a review of this portion of benefits to reflect changes in rates.

This demand relates to the table on the last page of the collective agreement (p. 67, breakdown of benefits).





## Introduce a premium for remote regions

In some remote regions, the cost of living is much higher than elsewhere in the province. Some of our members offer their services in remote regions such as the Magdalen Islands.

The public sector already has regional disparity clauses that allow compensation to be adjusted to reflect differences in the cost of living in areas far from the major centres.

## Consider the possibility of offering daycare services on non-fixed APSS days.

At present, the obligation to close on APSS days undermines the loyalty of RSGEs' clients in certain regions.

### OUR DEMANDS

We demand a premium for home educational childcare providers in remote areas.

We demand that the Ministry sit down with us and reflect on how to help RSGEs who are losing clients because of the obligation to close on non-fixed APSS days.



## Replace the term RSG with RSGE in the collective agreement

As home educational childcare providers, we are trained and competent. We are essential professionals in early childhood development during the crucial 0–5 year period. We shouldn't be afraid to say so!

### OUR DEMAND

We demand that the word “educational” be added to our job title in the collective agreement. For us, it's a matter of recognition and appreciation of our work.