

Survival of the SCGCIS: the FPPE continues to convey our demands

To our Spiritual Care and Guidance and Community Involvement Animators,

The 2019–2020 year has not been an easy one for your job class, but rest assured: now, more than ever, the FPPE believes in the relevance of the SCGCIS and values your significant contribution to the lives of students.

In October 2019, Bill 40 was tabled and we were stunned to find that it included the repeal of three references to spiritual care animation services in the Education Act (EA). Despite our demands, at the [FPPE](#) and with the [CSQ](#), the bill was adopted under a gag order in February 2020 and since then, the EA no longer contains references to the SCGCIS.

Last January, Minister Roberge announced the overhaul of the ethics and religious culture (ERC) course, primarily to “leave less room” for religious issues in this program, which has often been disputed. The FPPE participated in two discussions regarding the new ERC course, precisely to remind them that SCGCIAAs are already working with the main topics that the Minister wants it to include (interpersonal relationships, ethics, eco-citizenship, etc.).

The political intention is clear: the Legault government wants to remove all references to religion from public institutions in general and schools in particular, including, and wrongfully so, including the concept of spiritual life.

For the past few weeks, school service centres have been consulting with local unions concerning the 2020–2021 staffing plans. Some administrations have indeed decided to make staff cutbacks, citing, among other things, the changes made to the EA. The SCGCIAAs concerned are aware of the situation; however, we want to assure you that, in most areas, there have been no cuts.

Consequently, the FPPE and the unions concerned are actively seeking solutions. There are many arguments to justify keeping the SCGCIS that have been brought up in the labour relations committees, including:

- Upholding the legal obligation to offer the service (s. 1 of the EA) because it is provided for in the Basic school regulation (s. 4–5);

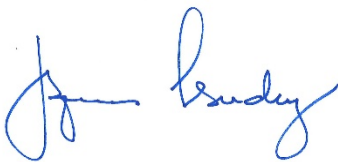
- Maintaining SCGCIS funding (measure 15001, part 5 of the budgetary rules).

The FPPE also met with the Minister and the APAVECQ on April 24th. Among other things, we asked that Minister Roberge voice his support for the SCGCIS and that the departmental reference manual be updated. The Minister's intention to change the job title still needs to be clarified; however, with the APAVECQ, we would also like to participate in changing the title and redefining the service's mission.

You were already asked last fall through various surveys regarding a potential change in job title by the APAVECQ, the SPPLRN, and the FPPE, among other things. If there is no consensus on any of the proposals, the survey results can help us to better understand your professional reality and be better equipped to advocate on your behalf. If you have not yet seen it, we ask that you read the [*Rapport présentant les résultats du sondage*](#) [Survey Results Report] that has been available online since March 13th.

Lastly, we consider your role to be more important than ever in the context of the current health crisis and uncertainty we are experiencing with COVID-19. You can help by welcoming students with kindness, comforting those who are feeling anxious, or who are grieving, and those who need someone to talk to. Holding activities to lift students' spirits bring them together, and help re-establish bonds will be crucial in the coming months and years.

Just like the students, the FPPE will undoubtedly require your participation in the coming months to remind people of the importance of the SCGCIS and to ensure its survival.



Jacques Landry,
President, FPPE(CSQ)