

## UNION AUTONOMY AND SOLIDARITY

The most fundamental principle of FNEEQ is the autonomy of its unions. Each union holds its own accreditation and has full autonomy in conducting its own local union activities.

### SOVEREIGN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

One of FNEEQ's main operational characteristics is the recognition of its unions' autonomy. At general assemblies, in accordance with the local union's constitution and practices, union members own all the power to set the union's orientations, and make decisions on the renewal of the collective agreement and pressure tactics.

### THE *REGROUPEMENT CÉGEP*

FNEEQ's *regroupement cégep* (Cegep Group) is made up of delegations from its cegep unions only. The number of delegates varies according to the size of the union. Based on what comes out of consultations in general assemblies, the *regroupement cégep* sets negotiation orientations, proposes action plans, and recommends either the acceptance or the rejection of the results of negotiations to the general assemblies. The *Regroupement cégep* usually meets three times per semester (more often during negotiations).

It is important to note that the conditions of militancy apply to all decision-making bodies of FNEEQ. FNEEQ's meetings, at all levels including the *regroupement cégep*, do not end later than 5:00 p.m. in order to respect principles of work and family life reconciliation.

The *regroupement cégep* is also responsible for issues relating to the cegep system, for example changes to the Québec College Education Regulations, ministerial orientations regarding the development of professional and technical training, financing programs with small numbers of students, etc.

## FNEEQ

The democratic life of the federation revolves around meetings of its affiliated unions: congress (every three years), federal council (twice each year), and its *regroupements* (groups). FNEEQ has three *regroupements*: one for cegep teachers, one for sessional lecturers at university and one for teachers in private schools.

As FNEEQ is the organization that represents the most members in both the cegep system and the universities, its credibility within and outside the CSN is based on solid ground when it intervenes on issues related to the promotion and development of post-secondary education.

## THE FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE CSN

When negotiating collective agreements, the four CSN federations representing public and parapublic sector workers set up a coordination committee, the *Comité de coordination des secteurs public et parapublic* (CCSPP). This committee coordinates central table demands (salaries, pension plans, and parental rights) and develops common mobilization strategies aligned with the orientations adopted by, among other things, FNEEQ's *regroupement cégep*. This committee works by **consensus**, so no federation can impose its will on the other three. It is on this basis that FNEEQ's representatives participate actively in setting not only demands, but also in the central table negotiating process as a whole. In addition, as for sector-related demands, the *regroupement cégep* controls them on its own.

Within the CCSPP, FNEEQ was able to act with a free hand during the spring of 2005 on the occasion of union mobilizations at the college level. It thus could develop an autonomous action with the support of the other federations, which led to one and one-half strike days in order to force movement at the sector-related table. Similarly, in 2002, FNEEQ did not agree to extend its collective agreement, even though the other three CSN public sector federations made a different choice.

FNEEQ enjoys total freedom in making sector-related negotiation alliances and always looks for ways to favour them, as shown by its attitude regarding the work done on the teaching profession, among others.