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BACK TO SCHOOL EDITION: A STRONG START TOGETHER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



NEW SCHOOL YEAR, NEW MANDATE

Dear support staff members of the APPA family,

I hope the summer holidays have given you a chance to recharge your batteries and that you are ready to get back into the swing of things.

For my part, it is with great motivation and pride that I begin the 2026–2027 school year as Acting President of our wonderful union. As a long-time union activist who has taken on several roles within the union over the years, I feel ready to take the reins and tackle this significant responsibility.

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank my predecessor, Michel Picard, for all the years he dedicated to our cause. Michel remained committed right up until the end and, until his retirement, was an invaluable source of support for me. The advice and guidance he shared with me throughout my ten years at the union office are, in large part, among the reasons I am writing to you today. We wish him a retirement that lives up to everything he hoped for.

Although this new challenge will require a period of adjustment, I am confident that we will successfully navigate the road ahead. I am fortunate to be surrounded by an experienced team that will help make the transition easier. My professional experience as a team leader will undoubtedly also be a valuable asset moving forward.

Speaking of challenges, there should be no shortage of them this year and in the years ahead, as we enter the pre-negotiation period for our collective agreement. Our current collective agreement expires on March 31, 2028.

Provincial elections are just around the corner, and at this stage, it is difficult to know which party will take the reins for the next four years. One thing is certain: the CAQ government has left Quebec's finances in a very precarious position. The recent report by Quebec's Auditor General, Christine Roy, paints a rather concerning picture of what lies ahead. Returning to a balanced budget will not be without challenges, with a shortfall of nearly \$5 billion in the government's coffers. The Auditor General has compared the plan to return to a balanced budget to the Couillard-Leitao years, no less. Does the word "austerity" ring a bell?



That was a difficult period for the public sector, particularly Education. Remember the human chains formed around schools at the time to protest significant cuts. Today, there is no shortage of pressing priorities, including the cost of groceries, health care, housing, infrastructure, public transit and homelessness, to name just a few. Let us hope that whichever party takes power on October 5 will be committed to ensuring the proper functioning of Quebec's public services, particularly Education. Our sector must be made as attractive as possible. You all deserve good working conditions in a healthy and positive environment so that you can provide the very best for our young people. Taking steps backward is no longer an option!

During its years in power, the CAQ has also taken measures welcomed by the *Conseil du patronat du Québec* that have weakened the power of workers seeking better working conditions. Bill 14, which aims to give greater consideration to the needs of the public during a strike, is a good example. It opens the door to essential services in the Education sector in the event of a labour dispute. For these reasons, it is not unreasonable to believe that renewing our collective agreement may prove difficult. Let us hope the future proves me wrong.

Although we are your representatives and work on your behalf every day, your involvement is essential and will always be the key to building strong collective power, particularly during negotiations. As our slogan says, we are "stronger together." Throughout the APPA's 65-year

history, you have shown us time and again that whenever an important issue arises, we can count on you.

Beginning this fall, you will therefore be invited to participate in a survey to share your expectations and priorities for the next round of public-sector negotiations. Your participation in this exercise is essential to developing demands that truly reflect your realities.

Along the same lines, we will need a strong network of delegates and information liaisons representing all of our services and workplaces. If your workplace does not yet have a representative, it is not too late to get involved. Having this network in place will greatly help us coordinate our communications and future events.

This is just a brief introduction to what lies ahead in the coming months.

For now, I join my colleagues on the Executive Committee in wishing each and every one of you a wonderful school year at the CSSDM and EMSB. As support staff members, your contribution and commitment are essential to the successful operation of a school board and school service centre. Be proud of what you accomplish every day! Student success would not be possible without you!

In solidarity,

Patrick Bertrand

Interim President

2026-2027 CHALLENGES AHEAD



By: Kim Watson, APPA-EMSB 1st Vice President

The school year is already in full swing, and the APPA support staff members have been hard at work trying to ensure that the 2026-2027 school year is a successful one for all.

The budget cuts over the last two years have resulted in a reduction of in the number of support staff in all three sectors – special education, daycare, and the general

sector. The ever-increasing demands of the job itself, combined with the loss of support staff on the ground to perform the tasks, will exacerbate our already difficult working conditions and put us at greater risk of getting injured or falling ill. It is important to ensure that we all put our own health first.

Take your paid breaks, as well as your lunch break, to minimize the negative impact on your physical and mental health.

Remember - The jobs we do are important and the school system would not be able to function well without us! ■

Am I entitled to breaks?

It is the responsibility of the administration to ensure that breaks are scheduled.
It is the responsibility of employees to take their breaks.

Length of Work Shift	Break(s)	Details
6 TO 8 HOUR WORK SHIFT	 First Break *** (15 minutes)  Lunch Break (30-60 minutes)  Second Break *** (15 minutes)	● Shall be taken towards the middle of the morning period (paid). ● Towards the middle of the workday (unpaid). ● Shall be taken towards the middle of the afternoon period (paid).
MORE THAN 5, BUT LESS THAN 6 HOURS	 Break Period *** (15 minutes)  Lunch Break (30-60 minutes)	● Shall be taken roughly midway through a 3-hour work period. ● Towards the middle of the workday (unpaid).
3 TO 5 HOUR WORK SHIFT	 Break Period (15 minutes)	● Shall be taken towards the middle of the work shift (paid).

 *** To be entitled to a 15-minute break, you must be working for 3 hours consecutively. ***

 **STRONGER TOGETHER**

UNDERSTANDING OVERTIME

OVERTIME: ANY EXTRA TIME THAT YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR EXPLICITLY ASKS YOU TO DO ABOVE YOUR REGULAR DAILY WORK HOURS.

IS IT REALLY OVERTIME?

If you're invited to school meetings or events during your regular work hours, it's not overtime. **However, if these activities are outside your regular work schedule, clarify by email whether your attendance is optional or mandatory. If required to attend, it's considered overtime**, and you should be compensated at time-and-a-half taken as time off. If this time off isn't agreed upon within 30 days, you can request that the hours are paid to you. The EMSB has a maximum of one month after your request is made to pay you.

TRACK YOUR OVERTIME

Keep a detailed record of your overtime, including dates, hours worked, and email instructions from your supervisor. Ensure they sign off on your records to avoid disputes.

VERBAL AGREEMENTS

Verbal agreements aren't covered by our collective agreement. Unless you have a signed document or email indicating that both you and your immediate superior have agreed to this exchange, you won't be able to prove that the deal was made, and the union may not be able to help you! ■

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE PRIORITY OF EMPLOYMENT LIST

ALL NEWLY HIRED SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF ARE ADDED TO THE PRIORITY OF EMPLOYMENT (POE) LIST. THE POE LIST, ALSO KNOWN AS THE RECALL LIST, IS USED TO CONTACT EMPLOYEES FOR TEMPORARY OR REPLACEMENT POSITIONS.

REGISTERING FOR THE POE LIST

When registering on the POE list, the employee must complete an availability form that includes:

- The job classification(s) for which you are qualified and willing to work.
- The shifts and days of the week you are available.
- The regions within the EMSB's territory where you are willing to work.
- A reliable telephone number where you can be reached.

CHANGING YOUR AVAILABILITIES

You may modify the regions, shifts and days of the week you are available to work up to two (2) times per school year.

To do so, you must submit a written notice to the Board at least 14 calendar days before the change takes effect. The Board should provide a copy of this notice to the union.

IF YOU'RE TEMPORARILY UNAVAILABLE TO WORK

You may ask the Board to recognize a period of unavailability for up to 12 months. This can be renewed with the Board's approval. Your request must be made in writing and must include your reason for being unavailable.

Once you become available to work again, you must contact HR to advise them, or you may not be called for a replacement position.

GROUNDINGS FOR REMOVAL FROM THE POE LIST

Your name may be removed from of the priority of employment (POE) list if:

- You refuse four (4) call-backs in the same school year, unless you have a recognized reason.
- You do not report to work at the agreed time without a valid reason.
- You have not worked for the Board in the past twenty-four (24) months.
- You obtain a regular position with the Board.
- Human Resources decides to remove you after reviewing at least two (2) negative evaluations from two different managers.
- You resign from the EMSB

RECOGNIZED REASONS TO REFUSE AN ASSIGNMENT

The Board considers the following as recognized reasons for refusal: Parental leave, occupational injury or disability. Death of a spouse or close family, wedding of the employee or immediate family, or unavoidable circumstance. You may be asked to provide proof of the reason (doctor's note, memorial card, wedding invitation etc.).

PROCEDURES FOR RECALL

The Board contacts individuals on the priority of employment list according to job classification and in order of seniority. Employees are recalled following the procedure below:

- a) The priority of employment list is applied by job classification.
- b) Employees are recalled based on seniority and their stated availability.
- c) When contacted, the employee is given a deadline in which to respond.
- d) If an employee refuses the proposed assignment, the next person on the list is then called.

- e) An employee must complete their current temporary assignment before accepting another, unless it is a regular position with the Board.

Employees are responsible for ensuring the Human Resources Department has up-to-date contact information (email, phone number, address, etc.). ■

HAVE YOU VISITED THE APPA UNION WEBSITE LATELY?

THE APPA WEBSITE IS A GREAT PLACE TO FIND HELPFUL INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTS ABOUT YOUR UNION, YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT AND THE CSN.

Here are just a few things you'll find:

- Collective Agreement documents
- School Delegate information
- Group insurance information
- Professional improvement information
- Stagiaire supervision information
- Union news, events and updates

STAY INFORMED. STAY CONNECTED.

APPA.QC.CA/EMSB





SPECIAL LEAVES:

HOW MANY DAYS AM I ENTITLED TO?



SPECIAL LEAVE		DAYS ALLOTTED
	Employee's Marriage or Civil Union	7 consecutive days (including non-working days)
	Marriage or Civil Union of a Parent, Child, Brother, or Sister	Day of the event only. (If the celebration takes place on a weekend, the day cannot be claimed.)
	Death of a Spouse, Child, or Stepchild Living with the Employee	7 consecutive days (including non-working days)
	Death of a Spouse's Minor Child Not Living with the Employee	3 consecutive days (including non-working days)
	Death of a Spouse's Child Not Living with the Employee	2 consecutive days (including non-working days)
	Death of a Parent, Brother, or Sister	5 consecutive days (including non-working days)
	Death of a Father-in-Law, Mother-in-Law, Brother-in-Law, Sister-in-Law, Son-in-Law, Daughter-in-Law, Grandparent, or Grandchild	3 consecutive days** (including non-working days)
	Death of an Ex-Spouse (only if there are minor children from the union attending the commemorative service)	Day of the funeral
	End-of-Life Care and Medical Assistance in Dying	Day preceding the death
	Moving Residence	1 day per year
	Unavoidable Circumstances (e.g., fire, disaster, flood, etc.)	Maximum of 3 days per year



NOTES

- * Weekends count toward the allotted leave period. Employees may reserve 1 day for the funeral; however, if the funeral takes place on a weekend, the reserved day cannot be claimed.
- ** These days are granted only if the employee remains connected through marriage, civil union, or common-law partnership.
- *** The date of death does not apply if the employee has already completed their workday.



ADDITIONAL LEAVE FOR TRAVEL TO A COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

TRAVEL DISTANCE	ADDITIONAL LEAVE
More than 240 km	1 additional day
More than 480 km	2 additional days



We understand that important life events require time and care.
Thank you for your dedication. Please contact HR if you have any questions.

PREPARING FOR THE 2028 NEGOTIATIONS: WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?



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IT MAY SEEM EARLY, BUT PREPARATIONS FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS WILL SOON BEGIN.

The **FEESP-CSN School Sector** will be gathering ideas and proposed demands from support staff unions across Quebec to help establish priorities for the next round of negotiations.

Keep an eye on your inbox! In the next few weeks, the APPA will be sending you an important survey to find out what matters most to you at work.

We want your thoughts on topics such as working conditions, wages and premiums, job security, employment status, schedules and hours of work, workload, health and safety, leaves, benefits, vacation, staffing and movement of personnel, work-life balance, training and professional development, and more.

What do you think should be changed, improved or added? And just as importantly, what provisions are working well and should remain protected?

This is your opportunity to help shape the demands we bring forward. We want to hear from you! ■

APPA
Stronger Together

ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSIONNELS DU SOUTIEN ADMINISTRATIF
Informer • Soutenir • Représenter

Ensemble pour des milieux de travail plus forts!

You Are Not Obligated to Find Your Own Replacement

A reminder to all APPA members

- Know your rights!** As an APPA member, it is important to know your rights and responsibilities when you are unable to report to work.
- You are not obligated** to find someone to replace you when you are absent from work.
- If you are sick, have an emergency, or are otherwise unable to report to work, you **must notify your immediate supervisor**.
- Personal (PLA) day:** You must notify your immediate supervisor in writing at least **24-hour notice** in advance. A PLA Day cannot be refused if the delays are respected. You do not need to provide a reason for your request, nor find your own replacement.

- ✓ RESPECT YOUR RIGHTS
- ✓ SUPPORT EACH OTHER
- ✓ A STRONGER WORKPLACE

Together for a brighter tomorrow!

GENERAL ASSEMBLY UNION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

All members are invited to attend the upcoming **Joint APPA-EMSB and APPA-CSSDM General Assembly**, where **Union Executive Committee elections** will take place.

Wednesday, September 30, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Videoconference

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Click below to register for the General Assembly:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/8bJ1mPXqcP?origin=IprLink>

Deadline to register: Friday, Sept. 25th at NOON