



PRESS RELEASE

Dawson College

Negotiation 2015 - Unions denounce government offers

Westmount, December 16, 2014. – With a single voice, Unions representing the Support Staff and Faculty employees of Dawson College, (DSSU, DTU), denounce the Government offers presented yesterday to public sector unions currently negotiating new contracts.

The Unions, speaking on behalf of 1400 workers, say that these employer offers are like a cold shower for their members and speak volumes about how little respect this government has for public sector personnel.

“The Government is arrogant to want to impose a wage freeze for two years followed by a meager 1% salary increase for three subsequent years,” explain the Unions.

General rage throughout the members

“Our members are shocked to be asked once again to tighten their belts in a context of economic and fiscal austerity. The *empty pockets excuse* touted by this Government is not a new phenomenon. This excuse has been used in every round of negotiations to justify paying public sector workers increasingly less than those working in the private sector,” say John Cuffaro and Brian Seivewright.

The Couillard Government has turned a deaf ear to our proposals. It has also attacked our right to a decent retirement by challenging the provisions regarding retirement age and pension calculation. These proposed changes to the retirement plans will no doubt result in early retirements in a context where vacant positions directly impacting student services are not being renewed. By not replacing these departures, the downsizing will have a direct impact on student services. The Government is prioritizing *zero deficit* over the success of our students and of our society.

Serious consequences for working conditions

John Cuffaro and Brian Seivewright also argue that the Government offers will have serious negative repercussions on working conditions.

“In addition to proposing minimal salary increases over 5 years, the Government is also burdening workloads and demanding unreasonable pliancy. Our members will feel further devalued and the difficulties we experience in attracting and retaining personnel will only be exacerbated,” warn John Cuffaro and Brian Seivewright. “Our members are already suffering the consequences of the recently announced budget cuts. Support staff are particularly affected by budget cuts with reductions in number of positions in the College’s staffing plans.

Mobilization will be the response

Finally, union presidents are calling on their members to mobilize and join forces to demand fairness from this government.

“Our members will respond to these offers with even more determination to negotiate a fair settlement. Our mobilization efforts will be aimed at convincing the Government to recognize the value of the work we do. This spring will be a hot one!”