

What Has Happened Since FAC Was Formed in 1988

We sent out a list of some of the debates in 1988, concerning why we left FNEEQ\CSN and why a new federation was formed. The following will try to address whether things have changed in FNEEQ\CSN and if the hopes for FAC have been fulfilled since then.

FAC

1. When FAC was formed, the idea was to convince the other cégep locals to join together in one autonomous union of cégep teachers. This has not happened. On the contrary, FAC has started losing some of the locals that founded FAC. Valleyfield left FAC around 2006, Lionel Groulx in 2008, Dawson College and Baie-des-Chaleurs in 2009 and on May 6, 2009 the FAC union at Andre Laurendeau decided to disaffiliate from FAC. One small regional local changed from FEC/CSQ to FAC but none of the FNEEQ/CSN unions have left FNEEQ.

2. There are rules at FAC about serving on committees for a limited time and then returning to teaching. However, this does not always happen in reality and we see some of the same people working at FAC for long periods of time. The statutes have now been changed to try to avoid this. At the same time, with a smaller pool of people to draw from, FAC has had a problem getting people to serve on committees. This has left us with many vacancies in the past few years.

3. Already in the Factual of Spring 2004, some active founding members of FAC were questioning the wisdom of keeping “these small union entities like our own”. (p. 20) or questioning if the reasons for founding FAC had translated into reality. “In creating FAC, we wanted to promote maximum member participation. Yet in many FAC unions the members present are quorum and attendance at General Assemblies still seems very low.” (p.20)

FNEEQ/CSN

1. According to FNEEQ (in the Dawson Owl Hoots, Issue 457 from April 7, 2009) FNEEQ can make decisions as a federation that can be different from the other federations in the CSN. They give two examples. In 2002 the other CSN federations accepted the extension of the collective agreement for a year, in exchange for a 2% raise, while FNEEQ refused it. In Dec.2005, the FNEEQ teachers signed an agreement that was slightly better than the decreed working conditions while the much bigger FSSS (hospital and social services federation which used to be the FAS) refused an entente.

2. According to the John Abbott union, the legal services have improved over the years and they say that they are satisfied with the bilingual union counselor at FNEEQ, a lawyer who represents them in arbitration hearings.

3. There is more translation at FNEEQ/CSN with most of the regular information going out to members being translated upon request. You can look at their website, which has an English version which you can access by clicking on English in the right hand corner.

4. FNEEQ is more involved in pedagogical issues through the School and Society Committee which publishes Cahiers, unfortunately only in French at the moment. But this is one of the publications which may be translated as a result of Dawson joining FNEEQ. If you look at Cahiers, you will find issues on the drop out problem, teaching by competencies, information technologies: the new generation, defending public schools, etc. The Carnet collegiale also has some articles that concern pedagogical matters.

So, some things have changed since the decision to start FAC in 1988. But more important than the past is what are we going to do in the future? And beyond the future of FAC, we have to look at the future of the VCTA and decide what we want to do as a local union. Where is our best interest? Stay tuned.