



## BUDGET 2020-2021: ANOTHER MISSED OPPORTUNITY

**The Legault government acknowledges the excellent state of its public finances. Still, “even with a surprise surplus of 2 billion dollars, the government comes up short in terms of investments in public services,” regrets CSQ president Sonia Ethier.**

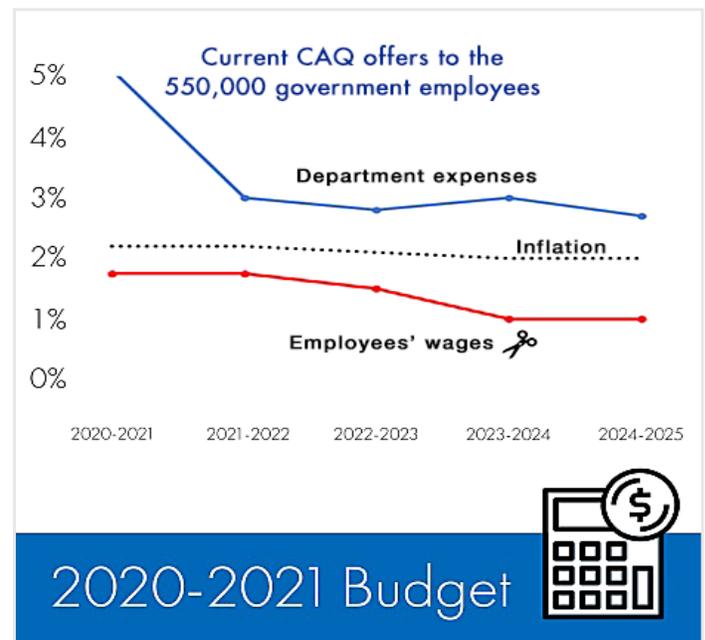
Even though the budget, presented on March 10, 2020, might not be the best place to make negotiation-related announcements, the government can't ignore the pressing labour shortage context if it wants to successfully implement its budget announcements.

“The budget repeats the insulting offers of last December. This won't help the public services networks to attract and maintain the necessary staff. The government only offered 7% over five years... Despite its repeated rhetoric, no additional concrete offer for school or CHSLD personnel was made,” reminds Sonia Ethier.

In its last budget, the government offers a string of mini-measures that are far from the structuring changes sectors are waiting for. “If the government wanted to enhance the early childhood, education and health sectors and erase the austerity scars of the past, this was a wasted opportunity,” observes Sonia Ethier.

### A lot of wiggle room

If we read between the lines, the budget allows for significant wiggle room to improve the wage offer and increase resources. The 3.3% expense increase in programs is much higher than the 1.4% salary increase currently offered.



“The government says it wants to consolidate services in early childhood, education, health and social services and in the departments. It will have to use what leeway it has to offer better working conditions and wages to the people keeping these services afloat,” concludes Sonia Ethier.

## MOBILIZED AND DETERMINED MEMBERS



Gathered in front of Québec's Palais des congrès on March 10, CSQ members sent a clear message to the Legault government: "We are not just a budget expense. We serve the population and pay taxes. We've had enough of excessive workloads, awful working conditions and lack of autonomy! Things need to change now!"

"We saw that the Finance minister put his skates on: we'll see him on the ice!," called Sonia Ethier. "After presenting us with insulting offers, below the inflation rate, there's only one thing the government can do: recognize its mistake and back up! Here's what we are calling for: the government needs to change course immediately! We want a budget that takes care of our people. And if the government refuses, they will be hearing about us. We will fight and we will not falter!"

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