



ASSOCIATION DES CADRES SCOLAIRES  
DU QUÉBEC

## Will Education Ever Be Part of Our Vision of Society?

Just like my 2,220 fellow ACSQ members, I chose to make a career as manager in the public education network. And just like them, I am shocked by the constant changes, claptrap and silo management surrounding an ideology which should engage the whole community, but which is currently leading who knows where.

Last February 21<sup>st</sup>, François Legault launched his manifest entitled “*Coalition pour l’avenir du Québec*”. Two days later, Premier Jean Charest delivered his inaugural speech at the opening of Parliament. Both stated their vision of education. A short-term vision sprinkled with ideas that seem so remote, if not disconnected, from the target: academic success. Have we to such an extent lost our points of reference in education?

Mr. Legault, you seem to believe, among other things, that success will come through increasing the power of institution managers. More power means more work, more responsibilities, more evaluations, more bureaucracy... As a witness of what is going on in the field, I can tell you that institution managers already have a lot on their back and they certainly don’t need that one last straw you intend to add on. I am a manager working in a school board. I am part of a community of key resource providers concerned with educational and academic success. My work is complementary and supportive of institution managers so that they can effectively fulfill their task. I provide them with advice and support in ensuring their actions are consistent and compliant. I make sure they have all the tools, services and resources they need to perform well. I share ideas and submit solutions, so that they can focus on their educational mission. I make sure that MELS-imposed accountabilities and bureaucracy, which, one must admit, have become excessive, are formatted to be effectively and clearly understood. In short, I am proud to be working with them, to share my expertise and to be a partner for success. I am proud of what we accomplish together to maintain the quality of our network.

Mr. Charest, you seem to believe, among other things, that success will come through distributing laptops and smart boards, using the “vous” form and delivering English ASL courses. Nobody doubts your good intentions, but education – and success – cannot emerge from thin spreading. **Where is your game plan? Who are your partners? Why don’t you ever follow up our requests to meet and discuss solutions?** Overtime, we have developed a unique and diverse know-how that makes us the greatest pool of expertise in school management in Québec, both in administrative and educational services. Nearly 25% of our members (approximately 500) are institution managers (schools and centres). Let’s be honest: We are way ahead of everybody in understanding the basic needs in education. We are both actors and observers of what is going on in the field. And yet...

We are quite concerned with education as the key to a successful future for Québec students. We believe success will only be possible when education will be valued, instead of being criticised and weakened as is the case in the current public debate. When are we going to walk the talk and make education a true vision of society? Make it a structured, well thought, inspiring vision engaging all field of expertise, one that rallies everybody around a common understanding of what is really at stake. Make it a stimulating project worthy of our know-how as Quebecers.

In their 2008-10 Report on the situation and needs in education entitled “*Conjuguer équité et performance en éducation, un défi de société*”, the *Conseil supérieur de l’éducation* (CSE) recalls that despite the tremendous progress in education in Québec since the Quiet Revolution, work remains to be done to make sure Québec continues to be part of the most advanced societies with regard to the performance of our education system. The CSE says that education must be seen as an investment with returns measurable in the mid and long term and as an asset for Québec’s continued cultural, social and economic development.

26 years ago, I took on a career in education with the fieriness of my youth, and that fire is still burning. I still feel passion for my work as a manager, and I am still inspired by the skills of my colleagues, by the wealth of ideas that circulate, by the number and quality of new projects, and by clear examples of success.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the dynamism and commitment of those who struggle to maintain the strength and quality of the network. I hope someday in the near future the challenge of making education a vision of society will be taken up with determination to make it an object of national pride and to tone down the dark, reductionist and depressing claptrap that currently prevails on this vital issue.

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*School executives work in French and English school board, in adult and vocational education centres and in over 100 schools in Québec’s public school network. They provide essential services to over one million students, over 100,000 teachers and over 2,500 academic institutions.*

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