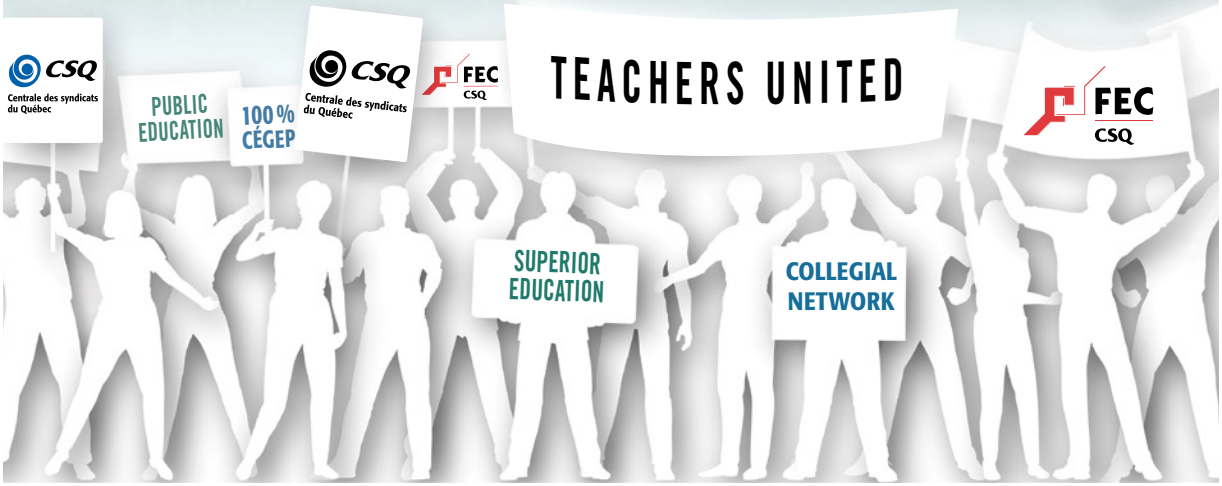
FEC
CSQ

CEGEP Funding

Ensuring stable, quality college education throughout Quebec



In response to the implementation of the Expert Committee on the Resource Allocation Model, in the fall of 2017, we have proposed solutions to some of the most critical issues related to the lack of funding in CEGEPs.

Over the past few years, the CEGEP system has been severely put to the test as a result of government cutbacks. After decades of upward and downward funding patterns, more often than not marked by cuts rather than reinvestments, the challenges that CEGEPs have been facing in attempting to balance their budget without reducing their services to students, have been denounced by everyone.

With our proposals, we want to ensure a more stable, predictable funding pattern for CEGEPs and ensure the stability of the teacher workforce. However, these changes will need to be operated in such a way as to reduce the complexity and improve the stability of the financing method used for CEGEPs.

We feel that reforms will need to adopt an essential system-wide vision, which will allow to reinforce the spirit of cooperation among colleges instead of sharpen competition.

After the celebrations around the 50th anniversary of CEGEPs, it is worth pointing out that CEGEPS are playing a leading role. This Quebec innovation remains a major success that is key to ensuring access go higher, pre-university or technical education throughout the territory and to providing regional communities with poles of educational, cultural, economic, and social development.

REPAIRING THE DAMAGE DONE BY AUSTERITY POLICIES

It is widely known that the cutbacks imposed in recent years, assessed at 155 million dollars by the *Fédération des cégeps* from 2011 to 2016, have yielded devastating effects. Students have not had access to an adequate service offering, and staff members throughout the CEGEP system have been experiencing increasing job insecurity.

These cutbacks, owing to the extreme budgetary constraints they have yielded, have highlighted the flaws and weaknesses of the CEGEP financing method, FABES[1]. The complexity and unwieldiness of financing rules and budgetary annexes do not allow for equitable resource use. In addition, too many special allowances are neither consolidating nor guaranteed in time.

In spite of the ongoing review, a change to the funding rules that would simply reshuffle resource distribution among CEGEPs, without reimplementing adequate financing, would by no means be acceptable. At the beginning of the next academic year, the government must repair the damage done by going backwards on its previous cutbacks and reinvesting to develop our public institutions that have proven themselves for 50 years.

Photo credit: Dany Hudon

Photo credit: Joanie Cauchon

1. For a presentation of FABES, please see the CSQ document, *Le mode de financement des cégeps. Compressions et formule imparfaite*. Available on line (in French) at the following address: http://www.lacsq.org/dossiers/economie/le-mode-de-financement-des-cegeps-compressions-et-formule-imparfaite/

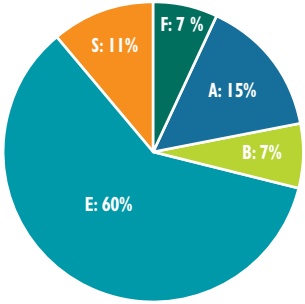
Against a background where it is announcing surpluses of more than 4 billion dollars and deems relevant to grant over 3.4 billion dollars in tax reductions for the years to come, the government can no longer hide behind rigour to refuse to reimplement an adequate funding level for the CEGEP system.

The acronym FABES explained:

Allocations

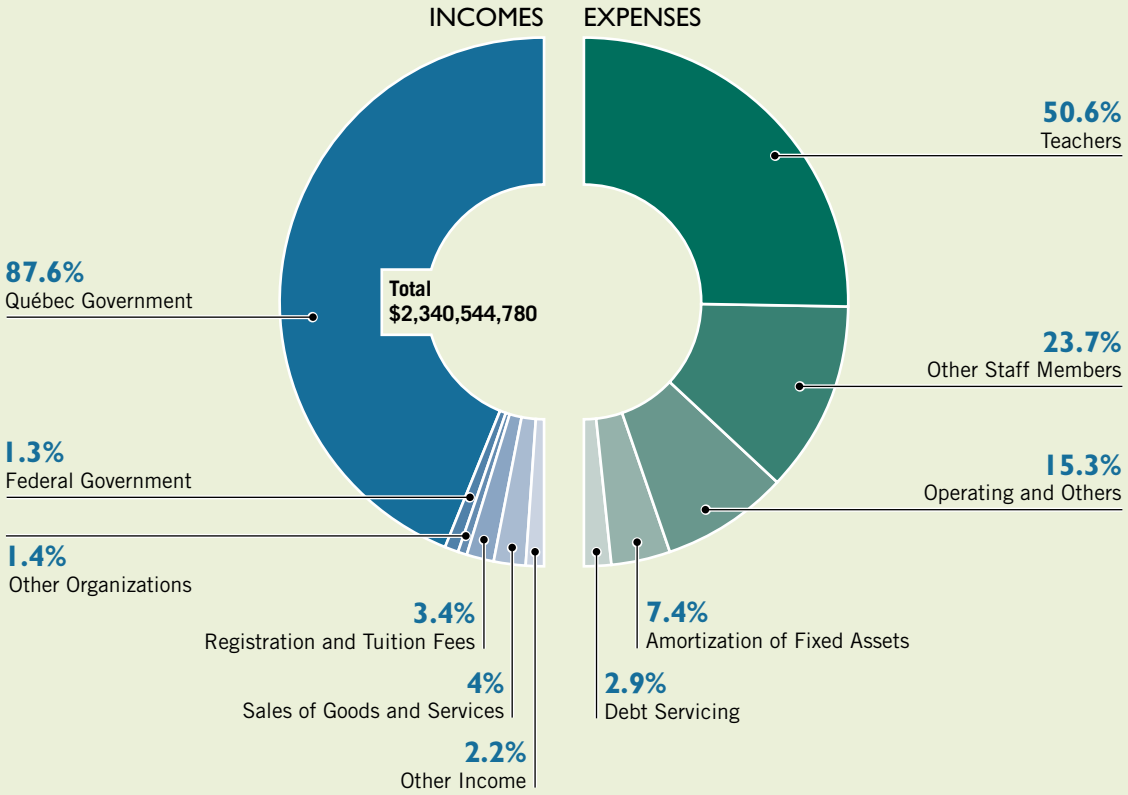
- **F** Fixed overhead
- **A** Pedagogical activities
- **B** Buildings, concrete and offices
- **E** Teachers
- **S** Special projects (targeted, although not always stable)

Proportion of the different FABES categories



Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. *Régime budgétaire et financier des cégeps*. Québec Government, 2017.

2015-2016 CEGEP Budget



Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. *Révision du modèle d'allocation des ressources aux collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel*. Consultation document. Québec Government, 2017.

TEACHING AT THE HEART OF CEGEPS

Teaching is at the heart of CEGEPs' activities, and so is the corresponding funding envelope. The CEGEP system thus invests more than 50% of its budget for the teaching staff, out of a total amount of approximately 2.3 billion dollars.

Nearly 90% of subsidies come from the Quebec Government, hence the importance of any change to financing rules. These are, in some respect, interdependent on ressources devoted to teaching in accordance to the collective agreement. This is particularly true for specific annexes respecting students with disabilities or special needs, for small cohort support or even for anti-competitive rules that provide for penalties in case of academic estimate overrun (Annexes S024, S051, and A007).

However, the teaching workload has increased and become more complex over the past few years[2]. The impact of technological changes, the increased number of internships and the effects of an increasingly heterogeneous student population, have namely led to new requirements that are not being properly taken into consideration in budgetary rules.

Photo credit: François Beauregard

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For these reasons, we are calling for:

- A significant increase in professional development budgets (which have not been indexed since 2005).
- An adequate, specific financing for student internship coordination in all technical programs, namely nursing.
- A change in the calculation of the CEGEP accessibility program for students with disabilities or special needs, in order to take into consideration the actual number of individuals registered under these labels.
- Adequate financing for e-training and distance training-related activities.
- A review of the student enrolment declaration method to make sure funding is aligned with course groups planned at the time of workload submission.

2. On this topic, please see: *Enseigner au collégial. Portrait de la profession*, Study by the Joint Committee, March 2008.

ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY

With over 50 institutions or campuses throughout the territory and some 175,000 students yearly, the college system is a real springboard for access to higher education. We must preserve and emphasize this heritage that is being threatened, among others, by the demographic decline in several Quebec regions, but also by the lack of coordination among the various government stakeholders.

Providing better support for CEGEPs and programs having recruiting difficulties

In order to ensure a minimum, diversified offer throughout the territory, a number of CEGEPs have access to a complementary funding when program cohorts are too small. Sometimes, a program is suspended because one or two enrolments are missing for a given year. The rules surrounding accessibility to this funding envelope must be reviewed in order to define sustainable, profitable conditions for all colleges with recruiting difficulties. This includes regional institutions and small colleges, with multicampuses located near large establishments.

Photo credit: François Beauregard

Improving access to the current Annex S026 by lowering eligibility thresholds and reducing those limitations currently limiting access to a number of colleges owing to their geographic location.

Acting upstream on enrolments and program offerings

In addition to requesting changes to financing rules to ensure the sustainability of all CEGEPs, we are also calling for the implementation of a set of measures to ensure more enrolments in programs and colleges faced with a declining number of students.

- Developing regional contents and exclusive programs.
- Making the process surrounding new program authorizations more transparent.
- Raising the profile of technical or pre-university programs experiencing recruitment difficulties and coordinating their promotion.
- Centralizing the student application process.
- Adjusting and strengthening measures that foster student mobility and international strucent recruitment.
- Provide better support for adults wishing to resume their studies.
- Re-establish penalties for colleges overrunning their academic estimates.

Photo credit: François Beauregard

OUR MAIN DEMANDS

- Reinvesting in the public college system to repair the damage done by austerity policies.
- Making college funding steadier in order to maintain student services and ensure the stability of the workforce.
- Providing better support to teaching activities with increased funding for professional development, internship coordination, adaptation to new technologies, and new student support measures.
- Ensuring accessibility to college education throughout the territory by reviewing support measures for programs experiencing recruitment difficulties and acting upstream on enrolments and program offerings.

“After several years of budget cuts, the government will have to press on with the improvement of existing initiatives, but above all, to ensure the sustainability and increase the financing of the college system. Accessibility to college studies throughout the territory is at stake!”

Lucie Piché,
FEC-CSQ President

Photo credit: François Beauregard

To go further

Allocation des ressources dans les cégeps : réinvestir et rééquilibrer afin d'assurer la stabilité et la qualité de la formation collégiale partout au Québec. An opinion submitted by CSQ's College Federations to the Expert Committee on the Resource Allocation Model in CEGEPs, December 2017.

Le mode de financement des cégeps. Compressions et formule imparfaite. Coup d'œil économique CSQ, may 2017.

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Fédération des enseignantes et enseignants de cégep (CSQ)

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