



**LE SYNDICAT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT
CENTRAL QUÉBEC
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

1752 Route 170, Laterriere, QC. G7N 1A4

Phone: (418) 543-6082; Toll Free: 1-877-543-6082

Fax: (418) 543-4916; Toll Free: 1-877-542-4916

Email: sece-cqta@videotron.ca

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



With the continuing spread of the H1N1 virus, we find ourselves in unique situations. At present, teachers who are sick or who come to school and are asked by the principal to return home, must use their banks of sick days to cover days of absences. Our position is as follows:

1. If you come to work and are asked to return home by the principal because of virus symptoms, you should do so and you should be paid for that day.
2. Any subsequent days missed will be deducted from your bank of sick days. If you have a medical certificate stating that you do not have the virus, you can return to work.
3. On advice from our experts, it is our position (and the basic law of labour relations) that teachers should obey the instructions given and, if necessary, we will grieve later.
4. If your school board or the local health authorities arrange for your students to be bused to centres to receive their vaccination against the H1N1 virus, you should follow the advice already given in point number 3.

It is understandable that these guidelines are not 100% satisfactory to all teachers. Unfortunately, it is the reality which we must accept until and if, we receive new information.

SURVEY FOR TEACHERS WORKING IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS IN QUEBEC

I would like to thank those teachers who have already participated and would encourage all teachers who have not done so, to participate in the survey being conducted by Diane Guerin-Lajoie, a researcher from the University of Toronto, concerning the realities of working in a minority linguistic setting. The survey takes between 15 and 20 minutes to

complete and that is the maximum of your participation unless you decide to participate in the second phase (completely at your discretion). The link to the survey is:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=sC057mf9xK26a18QmoA4uw_3d_3d

SICK DAYS EXPLANATION

Recently, you should have received a statement of your bank(s) of sick days from the school board. I have received many questions regarding the use of these days. Each year, teachers receive six sick days, five of which are moneyable (if not taken during the year, they are placed in one of your banks of non used days which are redeemable when you retire or leave the employ of the school board). The one non-moneyable day is lost if not taken and cannot be banked for future use. In addition, each teacher receives a onetime grant of an additional six sick days (for full time teachers) when they are hired by the school board which are non moneyable and cannot be redeemed for cash at a later date.

During the year, teachers may use their six days granted, after which, additional sick days taken are deducted from the various banks that a teacher has, beginning with the moneyable days. In the current H1N1 context, sick days must be taken from these banks. When all the banks of sick days are depleted, any additional sick days must be taken without pay unless a teacher falls under salary insurance. The first five days of an illness are deducted from the days banked. After the five days are used up, the teacher then falls under salary insurance (75% salary for the first year, 66% salary for the second year) and no further sick days will be deducted. However, if a teacher has used up all available sick days from the various banks, the first five days (considered a waiting period) before salary insurance would start must be taken without pay.

These sick days should not be confused with Special Leave Days, which will be discussed further.

SPECIAL LEAVE DAYS

Teachers and administrators should consult the Local Collective Agreement for the provisions concerning Special Leave. These days are in addition to the sick days teachers are entitled to. You should note that for the purpose of applying for special leave days, it is the principal of each school who is responsible for approving special leave, not Human Resources at CQSB. Normally, except in emergency situations, you must apply for special leave, using the new form, which should be available in your school. It is not the secretary's role to approve or deny special leave. Her role is to simply supply you with the form, which you forward to the principal. For your information, the complete provisions for special leave, under the current local collective agreement has been printed.

SPECIAL LEAVES

5-14.01 Clause 5-14.02 of the Provincial Entente is replaced by clauses 5-14.06 to 5-14.12.

5-14.06 For the events mentioned in clauses 5-14.07 to 5-14.12, the board shall grant each full-time teacher a maximum of eight noncumulative nonredeemable working days each year without loss of salary, supplements or premiums for regional disparities.

5-14.07 Requests should be made in writing except in exceptional circumstances.

In the event of a death of a member of the teacher's family, a maximum of five consecutive working days including the day of the funeral.

The teacher's family includes at least the following: spouse, child, spouse's child, father, mother, brother, sister, parents-in-law, grandparents, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchildren.

5-14.08 A teacher shall be granted one day of special leave, for:

- the baptism of the teacher's child;
- the marriage of the teacher's parent, brother, sister, or child, or spouse's child living under the same roof;
- the ordination, the taking of the habit, perpetual vows, by the teacher's child, brother, sister, parent, or spouse;
- the graduation from university of the teacher, the teacher's spouse, child or parent;
- the changing of the teacher's domicile for the purpose of moving the teacher's furniture and personal effects. This provision shall not apply in cases where the teacher is changing domicile due to the termination of employment with the board;
- the naturalization of the teacher as a Canadian citizen.

5-14.09 A teacher will be granted a special leave for the following events:

- medical, dental or optical appointments that cannot be conducted

outside of working hours: a maximum of three days. Under normal circumstances, the teacher benefiting from this provision shall make request to the principal at least two days in advance;

- the minimum necessary travel time when they have to leave their community for any of the reasons mentioned in this article.

5-14.10 A teacher shall be granted the days specified, up to the stated maximum, for the following provided the teacher has notified the board in writing by September 15:

- a) three days for a teacher professing the Jewish faith and celebrating Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur;
- b) two days for a teacher who for reasons of faith observes Christmas Day and Good Friday on dates established by the Julian calendar;
- c) two days for a teacher professing a faith other than the Jewish or Christian faiths for the observance of major religious holy days.

5-14.11 A teacher shall be granted an annual maximum of three days to cover any other event considered an Act of God (disaster, fire, flood) which obliges the teacher to be absent from work.

5-14.12 A teacher shall be granted leave for his or her marriage: a maximum of five working days, including the day of the wedding; in this case the absence must not immediately precede nor prolong a holiday of more than three days.

5-14.13 At the discretion of the board special leave may be granted for each of the following, provided valid reason is presented:

- a) Adverse weather conditions which make it impossible for the teacher to report to school;
- b) Urgent and important personal and/or legal business that cannot be conducted outside working hours;
- c) Serious illness of a child when the provisions of clause 5-13.30 have been exhausted;
- d) In recognition of special circumstances.

THE REFORM?

As you may already know, the reform once again has a new name: the MELS is no longer referring to the reform as the **Renouveau pedagogique (Pedagogical Renewal)** but rather **Ecole d'aujourd'hui (Today's School)**. It will likely take more than a euphemism to change people's perception of the reform, however. Incidentally, this year marks the tenth year of its implementation. It was back in 1999 that elementary schools were first introduced to the new programs. The first version was abandoned because of strong opposition from both teachers and the media. The following year, schools received a revised version of the program. We can only guess what the future holds!!