



## **CTF/FCE Source Podcast**

### ***Podium Webinar: Unionism and collective representation in the post-pandemic period*** **Episode Highlights**

This podcast episode features the highlights from Professor Jean-Noël Grenier's presentation to CTF/FCE members on March 9, 2022. In this talk, Professor Grenier outlines collective bargaining structures in Canada's public education sector, discusses the impacts, challenges, and opportunities arising from the pandemic on the teaching profession, and emphasizes the importance of community mobilization in collective bargaining. He also offers some next steps looking forward in a post-pandemic landscape.

Sébastien Joly, Executive Director of QPAT and member of the CTF/FCE steering committee of the teacher's bargaining network, also joins to provide his first-hand experience and speak on the issues of collective bargaining from a union perspective.

#### **How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the teaching profession and in turn, collective bargaining? What challenges and opportunities have emerged as a result?**

Jean-Noël Grenier (JNG): Even before the pandemic began, the teaching profession, including the other professions in the education sector, was struggling in terms of working conditions, professional autonomy, wages, and social devaluation.

JNG: However, the pandemic opened the door to a new recognition of the teaching profession, creating an opportunity to renew collective agreements and to rethink Canada's education system and policies.

The pandemic turned the spotlight on teachers and the extremely important role they play in maintaining educational services.

#### **Why is the community's mobilization in collective bargaining so important?**

JNG: The unions within our education networks have found support and sympathy from the public. This means that those using the education system, i.e., students and parents, as well as our communities should be involved in collective bargaining. Our union strategies should include bringing these communities into the process.

#### **In your opinion, how could a [National Education Advisory Table](#) contribute to highlight the many challenges education and teacher organizations are facing at the provincial and territorial level?**

JNG: I believe that the creation of a national advisory table is crucial. This would provide a space where stakeholders could come together, discuss their realities, and develop cross-cutting solutions that provinces could then tailor to their specific needs.

JNG: A national coordination table would allow us to highlight the challenges facing education and the importance of education in Canada, and to exert political pressure, not only on provincial governments but also on the federal government to meet its responsibility and increase public funding for education through transfer payments to the provinces.