

Quebec Election: EPCA Questions to Parties



1. Pervasive teacher shortages. The pervasive lack of teachers in Québec is aggravated by several factors including career incentives, comparatively low salaries to neighboring provinces (particularly in the Outaouais) and unattractive working conditions. Tell us how your party intends to address the driving factors for the dramatic shortage of teachers in Québec.

At Québec solidaire, we recognize that the previous CAQ, Liberal and PQ governments have repeatedly failed in making the government an exemplary employer. Whether it's in the public schooling system, the public health system or civil servants in the government, the working conditions have not followed the cost of living and the conditions offered by the private sector, the main competitor to a government.

Québec solidaire vows to change this paradigm and ensure that working for the government, as a teacher, as a nurse or any other contribution is a source of pride and prosperity rather than stress and inequity. We will invest over a 1G\$ yearly to make sure the wages of all our public school teachers catch up to other provinces and to the private sector.

2. Law #21 and educational institutions. While not entering a discussion of the merits of bill 21, we would like to understand your position on enforcement specifically in educational institutions. Would your party repeal the application of Law #21 to educational institutions?

Québec solidaire believes that this unfortunate law is a result of a divisive rhetoric that has taken more space in the public space than it ever has, namely due to the CAQ and PQ governments. If we form the next government, we would remove all clauses that police the clothes worn by government officials, teachers or any other workforce concerned by this law.

At Québec solidaire, we believe the public institutions should be secular and that the clothes worn by someone do not impact their capabilities in remaining neutral when it comes to religious beliefs.

3. Completion rates in CÉGEPs. Students in CÉGEPs have an elevated dropout rate. The imposition of additional French graduation requirements will only aggravate this situation, combined with a lack of French language support in primary and secondary English feeder schools. What is the strategy of your party to support educational advancement of students attending English CÉGEPs? AND

4. Educational Success. With one of the statistically lowest achievement scores in North America, what measures would your party take to improve educational success for schools in Québec? AND

7. Rattrapage. What is your party's strategy to support children – particularly those already experiencing learning difficulties – to catch up for the learning that was lost during the Pandemic?

Today, teachers across the province are spread thin and have to do much more than what they are trained to do. The lack of professionals to assist teachers aggravate greatly the incapacity of our schooling system to address special needs. Teachers need to be able to count on therapists, speech therapists, psycho educators and other professionals to ensure all students are able to learn and pass their classes. Québec solidaire will ensure that there is a minimal number of specialized services and hours of services available in all the education systems of Quebec. All students will be able to get help for their needs, whether its diagnosis of mental health particularities or additional help for learning. All the necessary resources will be put in place for anglophone students in the public schooling system to successfully learn french.

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5. Mental Health. The pressures on our children and young people have been aggravated by a lack of resources and the impact of isolation related to the COVID-19 pandemic. What is your party's strategy for supporting mental health in Québec schools?

Québec solidaire's goal is to ensure access to mental health services for anyone in Quebec that needs it. We will hire 900 psychologists and 1000 mental health specialists, effectively making these services free and accessible. We will ensure professional flexibility and autonomy to ensure the same work conditions as mental health specialists in the private sector.

6. Social Cohesion. The passage of Laws #21 and #96 have served to deepen the cleavages and divisions within our schools and in our communities. What measures would your party adopt to support more diverse and inclusive schools where all Quebecers are made to feel that they belong?

Inclusivity is absolutely fundamental for Québec solidaire and we believe the government has the responsibility to promote a better climate for it in Quebec. We recognize systemic racism and believe that bill 21 worsens these dynamics in our society. Québec solidaire est une commission to discuss systemic racism throughout Quebec.

Québec solidaire's approach when it comes to the bill 96 is to protect the right of historic anglophone communities while still ensuring all new immigration has all the tools necessary to learn French, whether it's by going to meet them in their workplaces, making sure parents have access to subsidized kindergartens or financing community organizations with an additional 290M\$ yearly. A Québec solidaire government would also ensure everyone on the territory of Quebec has access to public services by ensuring translation wherever and whenever needed.

8. Law #96 and English CÉGEP enrollment. The law regulating who can study in English is strict at the elementary and secondary levels. Law #96 artificially imposes caps on spaces in English CÉGEPs for Quebecers having studied in English throughout elementary and secondary school. Would your party repeal the provisions of Law #96 that further restrict access for them to English CÉGEPs?

At Québec solidaire we believe that the reforms in the last 20 years have enforced competition between CEGEPS, with the competition favoring urban CEGEPS and anglophone CEGEPS, as 17,5% of Quebec students go to English CEGEP despite the fact that the anglophone community represents 8% of the population. We believe it's important to ensure the protection and promotion of the French language, so we are in favor of prioritizing the access to English CEGEPs for anglophone students. We also want to ensure everybody on the territory of Quebec has access to quality English classes, for equitable access to the job market.