



THE VOICE OF  
THE PARENT  
IN EDUCATION

# QFHSA NEWS

VOLUME 53 ISSUE 1

SPRING 2015

## Why members should attend the AGM May 2

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations will be having its Annual General Meeting on May 2, 2015. Why is this important to you, the average Home and School member? It is at the AGM that policy and direction for your provincial organization is determined. Why should the direction of the provincial organization be of interest to you? It should be of interest because delegates from each member association will be gathering together to hear about the work of the QFHSA and hear from their sister organizations. They will vote on changes to the QFHSA Constitution and Bylaws and get advice on their own governing Constitution and By-laws. They will debate resolutions that, once passed, will become policy for ALL Home and School Associations. They will share ideas, concerns and find solutions.

The AGM is where delegates get a chance to see the "Big Picture", where local concerns are brought to the provincial level and provincial concerns are brought to the national level, through our membership with the Canadian Home and School Federation. Last year QFHSA passed a resolution supporting the teaching of Financial Literacy in Elementary and High schools. This year, the Canadian Home and School Federation will be proposing the members of the national organization pass a similar resolution. A concern from a local association in Montreal, is brought to the provincial body and then on to the national body. In this way, the voices of parents are being heard.

This year we will be taking a look at **Resolution 2015/01: Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in Home and Schools**, **Resolution 2015/02: History of Residential Schools**, among others. Draft versions of these resolutions will be sent to your local association for discussion at your Home and School meeting. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and opinions.

The QFHSA is a provincial body and desires the participation of as many of the member associations as possible. In order to encourage attendance, we subsidize travel and pay for accommodation for the delegates from your member association to come to Montreal. The AGM will be held this year at the Novotel Hotel in St Laurent, QC.

Want to know what AGM looks like? Go to our website to watch this [video](#) produced at last year's meeting. Are you interested in being a delegate for your association? Speak to your president. Deadline for registration will be April 13<sup>th</sup>. All forms can be found at <http://qfhsa.org/agm.htm>



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QFHSA

Annual General Meeting



Saturday, May 2, 2015

Novotel Hotel, St. Laurent, QC

Make sure to visit our website regularly to get information about upcoming events. It is also a great resource for membership forms & documents, constitution & by-laws, QFHSA Strategic Plan, back issues of the NEWS, past briefs written by the QFHSA and valuable partner links and resources.

Please visit [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org) for all your association updates.

# A message from the President

As the old song goes, 'A change is gonna come'. Those of you who have been following the QFHSA NEWS, particularly our Special Issue on School Board Governance, know that we have a significant challenge coming soon. The Minister of Education Yves Bolduc announced before the school board elections that he would note the level of participation by voters, and that turnout would influence his thinking on the future of school board governance.

As you know, Quebec wide voter turnout was 4.85%, while the English board voter turnout was 17.26% and, even though many more people voted on the English boards than on the French boards, there are big changes coming.

We believe it is critical that any change to governance include parent participation. Home and School parents must remain focused on the local association in their school: Governing boards must do the same.

There will still be parent representation on school commissions in one form or another, perhaps similar to Central Parent Committees, so our Rights, Education and Resolutions (RER) Committee will be following the process closely and will keep you informed as we learn about proposed changes. If you would like to attend one of our RER meetings, we welcome your participation. We will ask that you send us your thoughts and concerns, and we will then convey them to the Minister.

Parent participation in decision making at this level is of highest importance - we will speak to this at every occasion.

*Larry DePoe*  
**QFHSA President**



## QFHSA NEWS

*Continuously published since 1949*

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### 70 years of memories

QFHSA is proud to announce the launch of a short history book about the organization. The book will be released at the Annual General Meeting on May 2. Marion Daigle has prepared this history, with the assistance of several staff members and volunteers. The book outlines everything from the formative years to the major issues that have been a focus over the years such as literacy projects, rights and leadership. Make sure you pick up your copy on May 2!

### QFHSA Mission Statement

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. is an independent, incorporated, not for profit, volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education and general well being of children and youth.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. promotes the involvement of parents, students, educators and the community at large in the advancement of learning, and acts as a voice for parents.

## A message from the Executive Director

### QFHSA Renewal - Taking another look at who we are

The Board of Directors of QFHSA felt it was time to take a closer look at the organization and to consider if its mission statement and activities were still relevant or in need of revision. On January 24, 2015 QFHSA hired Madalena Coutinho to lead them in a strategic planning workshop. Madalena is a certified facilitator and works with organizations to help them review their *raison d'être* and develop strategic plans for their future. The last time QFHSA did a Board retreat to consider the future direction of QFHSA was back in 2009 so it has been long overdue. Madalena was already familiar with two members of our staff by virtue of the school her kids attended, had been a member of Home and School at Gardenview before switching to serve on its Governing Board, and she was also previously acquainted with our President, Lawrence DePoe, with whom she had worked in the past. She, therefore, already had a pretty good idea of what Home and School was all about.

She brought to our attention the observation that although our QFHSA website and mission statement talk about the *what we do* it does not reflect the *why we do it*. It said very little about our beliefs or our vision. In one of the retreat activities, she had the Directors imagine QFHSA as having received an award of excellence for *outstanding contributions and service to the community* and asked them to describe what it was that Home and School had done that had got them to that place.

The Directors had to develop a vision and to focus on the "why they were doing what they were doing", and not so much on the "whats" and the "hows". It was interesting to see that, once the Directors got beyond the "we do this" and "we do that because of this need or that need", and got down to the very basics of what they believe, of why Home and School matters, of why they do what they do, of why they are so committed to the cause, that they "rediscovered" the foundational principles of Home and School (and how noble it all sounded).

Madalena had the Directors and staff do a SWAT exercise (examine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats in regard to our organization). The Directors, once separated into smaller groups, considered the questions and wrote their thoughts/ideas down on poster paper, which were then presented and discussed with one another collectively. Madalena also had taken copious notes and was prepared to synthesize it all, and send it back to the Board for review.

We did not get as far as we would have liked on that first day. We managed to articulate our vision, list our goals and identify the SWATs but we did not get around to establishing what we needed to do to reach our goals, the nuts and bolts, so to speak. That would be for another session. After all, the Board had been rather ambitious in thinking they could take a 70 year old organization like QFHSA and get its future figured out in under 9 hours. It was quite a job for the facilitator to keep us all focused and on track as it was.

The Board met again in February to finish the exercise and hammer out the objectives and actions needed to achieve those objectives, both on the Board level and at the Local Association level. This final document will be presented to the entire Home and School Membership at the AGM for discussion and further fine tuning.

We are looking forward to bringing the vision and goals to the AGM in May, expounding on it and fine tuning it with the membership. It will be an opportunity for us all to take a fresh look at Home and School and see what it is that we really want it to be and how to make that vision happen. We invite you, the membership, to read the draft Vision, Goals and Mission Statement of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations when it appears in the Summer edition of the QFHSA NEWS and we will welcome your thoughts/suggestions/reflections on what we have created at that time. Your feedback will be required!

*Carol Meindl*

**QFHSA Executive Director**



#### QFHSA Board of Directors

**Top row left to right:** Brian Rock (Vice President), Mona Segal (Secretary), Rhonda Boucher (Director), Lawrence DePoe (President), Wanda Leah Trineer (Treasurer),

**Front Row left to right:** Carol Meindl (Executive Director), Joyce Shanks (Director), Rickhey Margolese (Vice President), Rosalind Hoenig (Executive Vice President).



## Membership Services Report

Greetings from the membership coordinator!

In January, numerous Home and Schools received formal letters (as opposed to emails) that listed the documentation that was still outstanding for the 2014-2015 school year. In a few cases, the documents had already been forwarded and had to be resent, but many Home and Schools had not submitted all the required paperwork. To be considered in “good standing” everything must be submitted. In some cases there are exceptional circumstances and allowances can be made if the QFHSA office is notified. In extreme cases if requests for documentation are ignored, an association may be put on probation by the QFHSA Board of Directors and the school principal is advised of the Home and School’s status.

Why is it important to be an association in “good standing”?

- \* Only associations in “good standing” can receive tax receipts for their charitable donations, a letter of good standing which is needed when applying for a liquor license or some grants, additional insurance for off-site events, etc.
- \* In December, the QFHSA has obligations to its’ own insurance company and its’ auditors. The membership lists and fees are an integral part of the QFHSA’s reporting requirements.
- \* By submitting a President’s Activity Report and Treasurer’s Report, the Home and School is being transparent and enables the QFHSA as the parent organization to confirm good financial practices and collect ideas to share with other local associations. These reports are also historical records of both the Home and School and the school.
- \* Executive lists allow the office to contact the correct officers, and the Local Association Renewal Form strengthens the ties the locals have to the QFHSA.
- \* Executive lists, membership lists /fees and the administration fee guarantee that the Home and School will be covered by the 3rd party damage and director’s liability insurance.

The following are required:

Document	Due Date	Responsible
Previous year’s President’s report	June 30th	President from that school year
Previous year’s Financial report	June 30th	Treasurer from that school year
Executive list	June – Sept	Executive for current year
Administration fee	Sept 30th	Executive for current year
Local Association Renewal	Sept 30th	Executive for current year
1st Membership List & fees	Oct 31st	Membership Chair and Treasurer

The QFHSA has a responsibility to present a transparent and accountable not-for-profit volunteer organization to the membership and to its’ funding bodies, and the local association executives have an equivalent responsibility to provide a transparent and accountable organization to its’ own members and to their provincial body.

Together, we are stronger.

*Marlyn Brownrigg*

**QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator**

marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org

## QFHSA Membership

**As of February 12<sup>th</sup>** (newsletter submission deadline), the following Home and School Associations have submitted all documentation to the QFHSA and are eligible to send delegates to the QFHSA AGM. If there are extenuating circumstances prohibiting your Home and School from submitting documents please advise the QFHSA office.

Allion	Arundel	Baie Comeau	Beacon Hill	Beaconsfield High
Beechwood	Beurling Academy	Birchwood	Buckingham	Cedarcrest
Chelsea	Dorset	Dorval	Dunrae Gardens	Eardley
East Hill	E.P. Beaconsfield	Edgewater	Petit Bouts-de-Choux	
Elizabeth Ballantyne		Evergreen	Flemming (new)	Forest Hill
Gardenview	Gaspé Elementary	Gaspé Polyvalent	Genesis	Greater Gatineau (new)
Greendale	Grenville	Hillcrest Academy	Honore Mercier	John Rennie
Jules Verne	La Tuque	Lakeside	Lauren Hill	Lindsay Place High
Lord Alymer	Macdonald High	Margaret Manson	S.E. McDowell Merton	
Metis Beach	Mount Pleasant	New Carlisle	New Richmond	North Hatley
Onslow	P.E.T.E.S.	Poltimore	Roslyn	Royal Vale
Royal West	Shawinigan	Shigawake/Port Daniel	Soulanges	South Hull
Souvenir	Springdale	St. Anthony	St. Charles	St. Edmund
St. Gabriel	St. John Fisher	St. Lawrence	St. Patrick	St. Paul
St. Thomas	Westpark	Westwood	Wilder Penfield	Willingdon

## eBooks: Useful, harmful or simply unnecessary?

*By Susan Rvachew, Ph.D., S-LP(C) and Kathrin Rees, Special Education Teacher and Doctoral Candidate, School of Communication Sciences, McGill University*

Digital tools are omnipresent now at home and school. Children's use of digital devices has tripled in just the past few years and access by toddlers is growing especially fast. We all know that reading to our children is important and that books in our homes lay an important foundation for success at school. We don't know if electronic books will help or hinder language and reading acquisition by young children. We do know that parents have a lot of questions about these tools: When should my child be allowed to play with digital devices? How much time should my child spend playing with digital devices? Should I read digital books with my child? Will ebooks help my child learn to read? Which ebooks are best for my child's learning? How do I help my child read on a tablet? If I do not have digital devices in my home will my child be disadvantaged in school? Will digital devices harm my child's health? Experts, journalists and celebrities sometimes try to answer these questions but you might be surprised to find that there is not much research to back up popular opinions. We

do not really know much about the potential harms or benefits of digital games and books for children's learning.

The research is clear about two aspects of ebook reading however: it shows that children really like them but that parents are more ambivalent about them and prefer to read standard paper books with their children. In our lab at McGill University we have been observing parents and children reading standard and electronic books together and we can confirm that children seem to enjoy ebooks. Some parents seem less comfortable during ebook interactions than when reading paper books to their children. One reason for this is that parents and children have had many years of reading standard books together and have learned to have effective interactions in this context. When reading digital books, often the children have had more

*(Continued on page 18)*

## Resolutions sub-committee looks to prepare resolutions for the QFHSA 2015 AGM

By Brian Rock, QFHSA Vice President

The Resolutions Sub-committee of the QFHSA Rights, Education and Resolutions Committee is looking for Home and School members to help draft, review, update, and suggest reaffirmation of resolutions to be presented at the QFHSA Annual General Meeting on Saturday, May 2nd, 2015. These resolutions, once adopted, become policy for all the Home and School Associations.

It is interesting work to be involved with and to learn the process of drafting the various resolution components: the title, the 'whereas', the 'be it resolved', and choosing the appropriate destinations. The exact wording of resolutions can be very important and takes a great deal of care.

Draft resolutions to be brought to AGM 2015 for caucusing and adoption will be:

- \* [Resolution 2015-01 Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in Home and Schools \(DRAFT\)](#)

- \* [Resolution 2015-02 Teaching the History of Residential Schools in Quebec Curriculum \(DRAFT\)](#)

Previously adopted resolutions that the sub-committee will be re-examining this year will be focused on educational issues:

- [Resolution 2001-06 School Maintenance](#)
- [Resolution 2011-02 Special Education](#)
- [Resolution 2011-03 Alternative Programs](#)
- [Resolution 2011-04 Students with Special Needs](#)
- [Resolution 2012-03 Wider Access to English Education](#)

Some of these resolutions were adopted back in 2001 and some more recently in 2011 and 2012. It is important to consider what the environment was at the time the resolutions were first proposed and adopted, and what, if any, have been the developments since then. If developments are deemed to be un-

satisfactory, then perhaps it is time to re-examine the resolutions, update them or reaffirm them.

Digital Citizenship is a topic that will also be examined as it can pertain not only to school children and young adults but also to parents. As it is a relatively new technology, social protocols are being created, refined and taught in the schools but what about the parents? Do the same rules apply to them?

If any of the issues above interest you and/or raise concerns, and you feel you have something you wish to contribute, please contact QFHSA Executive Director Carol Meindl at 514-481-5619 or toll-free 1-888-808-5619. Find out for when the next Sub-committee meeting is scheduled and how you can get involved. Note: Members can participate in person, by telephone, or by Skype or feel free to send an email letter voicing a concern or an opinion. They will be brought to the Committee meeting for inclusion in the discussion.

## Encouraging Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in Home and Schools

By Carol Meindl, QFHSA Executive Director

While completing the position paper on Bill 60 "The Charter of Values" in 2014, the QFHSA Rights and Education committee realized that the QFHSA did not have a policy on cultural diversity and inclusiveness. Before formulating a resolution on this issue, the QFHSA asked for feedback from its' local associations to promote awareness and gauge local practices. A survey was created that would address such questions as:

- \* Do you consider your school to be: culturally homogenous (mainly one culture), bi-cultural (the parent body represented by two main cultures), or multi-cultural?
- \* Does your Home and School or your school accommodate different parent needs and take various situations into consideration? (For instance, in some communities, it

would be best not to plan activities or meetings during hunting season. Not everyone hunts, of course, but enough do that, in some communities, it truly affects parental availability)

- \* Do you feel that your Home and School membership reflects the cultural reality in your school?
- \* If QFHSA had a policy on encouraging cultural diversity and inclusiveness, would your Home and School membership support it?

The draft resolution will be going out to the local associations prior to AGM (May 2, 2015) for discussion and consideration at your Home and School meetings. In the meantime, we would like to encourage everyone who has not yet completed the survey to please do so. The more general opinions we can bring

into the discussion, the more representative will be the final resolution.

Quebec is a multi-cultural province and happily so, as cultures can vary from community to community and what works in one place may not necessarily work in another. On the other hand, maybe it would. It just takes being fully aware of what makes up your parent community and finding ways to encourage as many as possible to be involved.

You can access the survey at: [bit.ly/1CZ2p3r](http://bit.ly/1CZ2p3r)

# Québec History Curriculum Resolution

By Sharad Bhargava, St. Thomas High School

QFHSA shall be presenting a resolution at the 2015 AGM to include information on Aboriginal Residential Schools in the Quebec History Curriculum.

## Background

Québec and Canada have a strained relationship with our First Nations Peoples. Residential Schools have helped define this relationship. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was setup in 2007 by the Canadian Government to deal with the issue of Residential Schools (<http://www.aadncaandc.gc.ca/fra/1100100015638/110010015639>).

From the TRC website:

**For over 100 years, Aboriginal children were removed from their families and sent to institutions called residential schools. The government-funded, church-run schools were located across Canada and established with the purpose to eliminate parental involvement in the spiritual, cultural and intellectual development of Aboriginal children. The last residential schools closed in the mid-1990s.**

During this chapter in Canadian history, more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were forced to attend these schools some of which were

hundreds of miles from their home. The cumulative impact of residential schools is a legacy of unresolved trauma passed from generation to generation and has had a profound effect on the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.

Collective efforts from all peoples are necessary to revitalize the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society – reconciliation is the goal. It is a goal that will take the commitment of multiple generations but when it is achieved, when we have reconciliation - it will make for a better, stronger Canada.

There are two reasons why information about Residential Schools should be included in the Québec History curriculum.

## 1. Teach the Truth

In its interim report (2012), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada identified a number of key recommendations for provincial governments, one of which was on the importance of reviewing curriculum materials. As the Québec Government moves forward with a reinforcement of its History curriculum, it should take into consideration the existence and impact of Residential Schools on our

history and culture. Specifically, the TRC's Recommendation 4 specifies "each provincial and territorial government undertake a review of the curriculum materials currently in use in public schools to assess what, if anything, they teach about residential schools." (Available online at [http://www.attendancemarketing.com/~attmk/TRC\\_jd/Interim\\_report\\_English\\_electronic\\_copy.pdf](http://www.attendancemarketing.com/~attmk/TRC_jd/Interim_report_English_electronic_copy.pdf))

The History that we teach should be true. The shared narrative that needs to be conveyed must include information about Residential Schools - the cultural genocide that was perpetrated on the First Nations people.

## 2. Entente with First Nations People

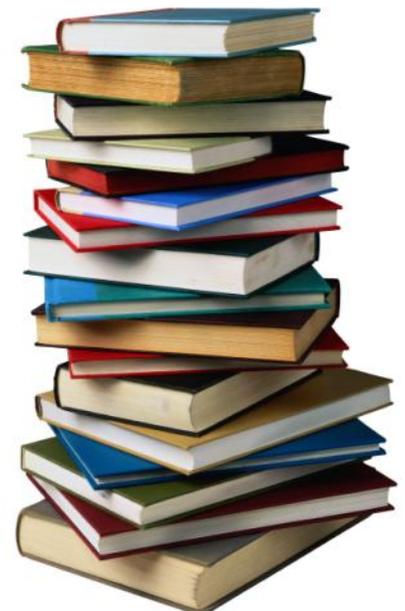
Québec and Canada have a strained relationship with First Nations communities. Going forward, we need to come to a fair and just mutual understanding on economic, environmental and other issues to enable us to live together in harmony in the future. For this to be achieved, our citizens need to know the true history of the relationship between Québec,

Canada and the First Nations people. This includes information about Residential Schools.

Residential Schools were a reprehensible and abhorrent episode in Québec and Canadian History. We cannot change the past, but we can acknowledge it, learn from it, and work towards building a better relationship with First Nations peoples in the future.

Home and School takes the responsibility to help encourage the Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport to include the teaching of the history of residential schools in Quebec in the school curriculum.

To see a copy of the draft resolutions, go to: <http://qfhsa.org/Resolutions/2015/2015.2-Residential-Schools-Draft.pdf>



## Save the date: Awards Banquet May 2

The QFHSA is again honouring outstanding volunteers and educators with its Annual Awards Banquet on the evening of May 2, 2015. Five major awards will be soliciting nominations from the membership:

**The Gordon Paterson Award**- established in 1973, and named after the Federation's first president to honour an outstanding educator who believes in involving parents.

**The Pat Lewis Peace Prize**- established in 1977, recognizes an individual or a group that is making significant contributions toward a safe and peaceful school or community.

**The Pat Lewis Humanitarian Award**-established in 2006, recognizes an individual, or group, at the elementary or high school level, that is making an outstanding effort toward a humanitarian cause.

**The Pat Lewis Environmental Award**-established in 2014, recognizes an individual, or group, at the elementary or high school level, that is making an outstanding effort toward an environmental cause.

**The Leslie N. Buzzell Award**- established in 1950, recognizes outstanding volunteer service at the provincial level and for furthering the aims of Home and School in general.

If you know a deserving volunteer or educator, who has done an outstanding job at your school, making it a better place for all, speak to your President to suggest they be nominated. Then form a committee to write up the nomination and submit it to the Awards Selection Committee by the deadline of **March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**. Nomination forms can be found at <http://qfhsa.org/Site/AGM/1415/Awards2015.pdf>

Recipients of the awards will be invited to the banquet and can bring a guest to accompany them. QFHSA will be happy to wine and dine them at the evening celebration. Plan on bringing a contingent of fans from your school to cheer them on.



Rosanna Caplan, Roslyn School Vice Principal; Michaela, Paul, Baby Alexandre; and Leah Trineer, Roslyn Born to Read Organizer.

## Born to read!



A thank you from a Roslyn Dad,

January 29th, 2015

Thank you to Roslyn School, Roslyn Home and School "Born To Read" organizers, and the amazing students who were out in force to welcome our family at this morning's event!

Peter, our son in Grade 1, Michaela, and I were really proud to attend Roslyn's "Born To Read" event and our baby Alexandre was very excited to participate.

Listening to the presentations by students, teachers, and administrators in a gym packed to the rafters with attentive students was fun for our family, perhaps even more so for us parents to get a snapshot of a moment in our child's day at school. It brought back great memories of our days in elementary school.

To have our baby's name announced and be invited onto the stage to receive a gift of books was thrilling, almost like winning an award.

As parents with a child at Roslyn, we definitely wanted to participate and show our support for the school and literacy. Once we were there, we were extremely proud as parents, guests and neighbours of such an amazing school - we couldn't possibly feel more welcome and part of the Roslyn School community!

Thank you again for organizing such a fantastic event to promote education, literacy and community!

Michaela and Paul

**Born to Read** is a great way to welcome new families into your school community as well as to promote literacy. Each school can do it a little differently but the end product is always the same: families feel welcomed and babies are introduced to reading at an early age. For more information on **Born to Read** and how to bring it to your school, call the office or check out <http://www.qfhsa.org/borntoread.htm>

## Your turn to shine: Upcoming Essay Contests

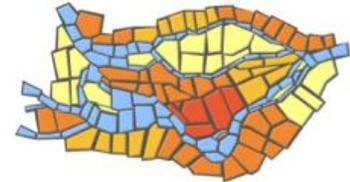


### Family Treasures

QFHSA is again looking for essays from students describing a family treasure, (be it a great grand-mother's engagement ring or their Dad's comic book collection) a family recipe, (either new or traditional) and/or a place on the Island of Montreal (either a building or space) with historical significance for their family. Every family has something that they hold dear, either for the sheer amusement of it, or for the nostalgia. Sometimes the object is a link to the past. Here is a link to [past prize winning essays](#).



### Famous Family Recipes



### An Island of Stories

QFHSA would like to encourage our Home and School families to share their stories with one another.

Deadline for submission is the end of March for [Family Treasures](#) and [Famous Family Recipes](#) and the deadline for submissions to [An Island of Stories](#) is the end of April. Prizes include books and Chapters gift cards and being published in the QFHSA NEWS Summer issue. For more information go to the Essays Contest button on our website at [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org)



## Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week 2015

Join us March 9 to 13, 2015 as we celebrate Canadian agriculture during the third annual Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week (CALW).

The mission of Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week (developed by Agriculture in the Classroom Canada) is to engage and empower teachers and students to participate and actively learn about Canadian agriculture by providing support with positive and realistic messages and activities.

Thanks to help from partners like Quebec 4-H, the Quebec Farmers' Association, Macdonald College's 'Farm to School' program, Le Bulletin des agriculteurs, and the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) this year's highlighted activities include:

- Learn to Speak Farmese
- Speed Date a Farmer
- Video presentation with live Q&A session\*
- Learning from My Lunch
- 4-H in-class presentations\*\*
- The QFHSA's "[Farm to Fork](#)" competition
- The CALW 2016 Bookmark competition

Each school to sign up will receive a FREE 10 page list of links to various resources as well as free copies of '[All About Food](#)'.

To learn more about CALW visit <http://www.aitc-quebec.com/canadian-agriculture-literacy-week.html>



# HISTORY CORNER

## Happy 95th Birthday, M. Paul Gérin-Lajoie: The First Minister of Education of Quebec

Born in Montréal on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1920, to lawyer Henri Gérin-Lajoie and Pauline Dorion, Paul descends from a famous Québec family originally from la Savoie in France. Tracing back his roots in New France to Sergeant Jean Gérin serving with the troops of the Marquis de Montcalm in 1755 in Québec, Paul is the grandson of Marie Lacoste-Gérin-Lajoie, pioneer of the Québec feminist movement and social activist; and great grandson of Antoine Gérin-Lajoie, celebrated poet (*Un Canadien errant*) and novelist (*Jean Rivard*) and Sir Alexandre Lacoste, Conservative Senator and Chief Justice of Quebec; great-great grandson of Etienne Parent, editor of *Le Canadien* newspaper; and grand-nephew of Leon Gérin, famous Québec sociologist and lawyer.

Paul graduated from Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf, Université de Montréal, and Oxford University.

A lawyer, he was admitted to the Quebec Bar in 1943, was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford in 1945, and was awarded a Doctor of Laws in 1948.

Paul was a principal architect of the Quiet Revolution in Québec leading the Cabinet of Liberal Premier Jean Lesage in the fields of education and youth, serving as Minister of Youth of Québec from 1960 until 1964, guiding through the Legislative Assembly of Québec the bill establishing the Ministry of Education of Québec and the Québec Superior Council of Education as recommended by the Parent Commission in the famous Parent Report on Education. Paul became the first Minister of Education and was Vice-President of the Council of Ministers from 1964 until 1966. A principled gentleman, Paul had practiced what he preached – running unsuccessfully against Union Nationale Premier Maurice Duplessis's dominant administration in Vaudreuil-Soulanges in the 1956 general election and 1957 by-election. Perseverant, Paul was eventually elected Member of the Legislative Assembly for Vaudreuil-Soulanges in the 1960, 1962, and 1966 general elections. Paul resigned as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in 1969.



Photo by Simon Villeneuve (Own work) [GFDL (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>)]

Paul was president of the Canadian International Development Agency from 1970 until 1977. He founded the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation, in 1977, an organization that has contributed to the basic education of children in the poorest countries, in addition to raising awareness of these international countries among elementary school children in Canada.

In 1979, Paul was made a Companion of the Order of Canada in recognition of his distinguished services to his country, chiefly as president of the Canadian International Development Agency from 1970 to 1977, and minister of youth from 1960 to 1964, and minister of education and vice-president of the council of ministers from 1964 to 1966 of the Government of Québec. In 1987, he was made an Officer of the National Order of Québec and was promoted to Grand Officer in 1998. In 2002, he was made a Knight of the Order of the Legion of Honour by the Government of France.

by Brian Rock, Vice-President, QFHSA & Co-Chair RER Committee  
Brian is a retired Secondary Teacher of the History of Québec and Canada.

Always a strong supporter, Minister of Youth Paul Gérin-Lajoie was awarded the Leslie N. Buzzell Award by the Quebec Federation of Protestant Home and School Associations in 1963 for outstanding service at the provincial level.

## Know Somebody who would make a great QFHSA Director?

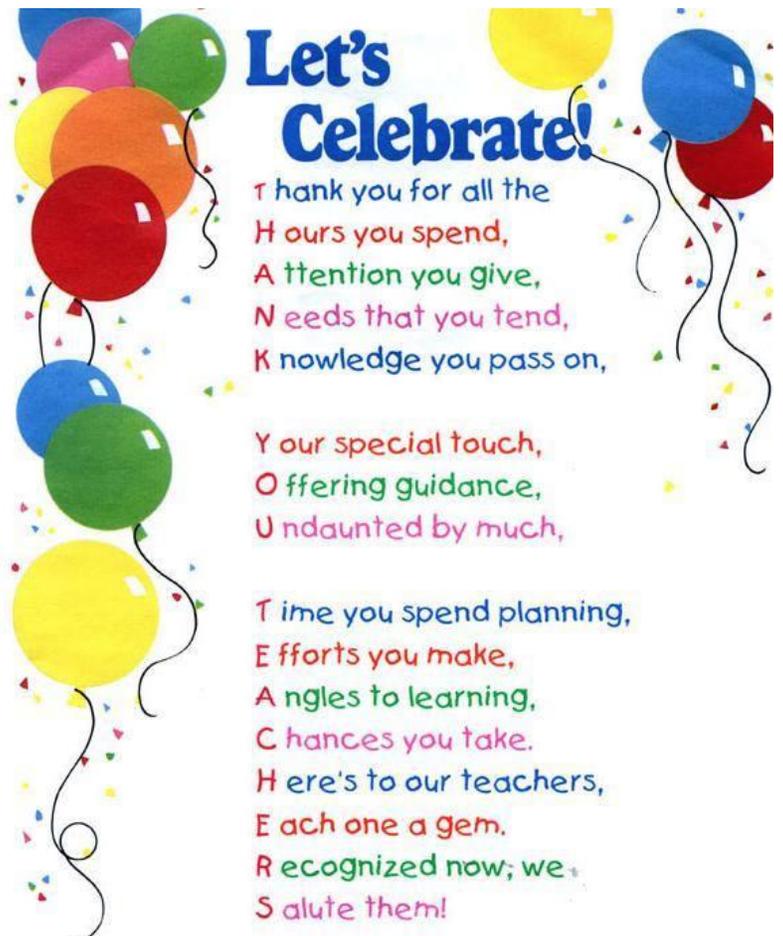
There is more room at the table! The QFHSA is actively seeking interested persons to serve on the Board of Directors.

Directors are involved in all aspects of the organization, from keeping up to date on issues concerning Education and Rights, to exploring new projects to promote literacy, to offering best practice advice to other local associations.

Directors sit at community tables and bring the perspective of the parent to the attention of education stakeholders and decision makers. Directors help draft resolutions and briefs to the Federal and/or Provincial governments. Directors help develop new projects to offer to the Home and School students and parents. There is plenty to do and everything can be a learning experience.

We meet on average eight times a year to discuss Home and School policy and plan events such as the Annual General Meeting, the Awards Banquet, the Annual Fall Conference and the Executive Appreciation Event. If you have skills and talent and would like to take it to the next level, join us at the next Board meeting to see what it's all about. If you would like more information on what the duties of a Director are, call us (514-481-5619) or send us an email ([info@qfhsa.org](mailto:info@qfhsa.org))

*Teacher Appreciation week was the first week of February, and many schools participated in honouring their teachers and staff for all their hard work. On behalf of the QFHSA directors and staff, we'd like to take our turn to say thank you for all you do!*



## Our new news editor



QFHSA has hired Qu'anglo Communications and Consulting, based in Ormstown, Quebec, as the news editor team for our newsletter.

Christina Franc will be the lead editor, with Hugh Maynard, president of Qu'anglo Communications, as the general manager. Qu'anglo Communications & Consulting is an enterprise with a mission to provide quality consulting services for the conception and implementation of communications, training and development initiatives, specializing in the area of sustainable development for agriculture and rural communities.

Christina is the Director of Communications for Qu'anglo Communications & Consulting where she manages the web-based activities, assembles newsletters and other publications, carries out

interviews for various publications and magazines, and prepares promotional materials for various clients.

Previously, she worked for the City of Ottawa where she was able to lead initiatives such as designing public murals, a youth committee, coffee houses, and political campaigning events.

She has a degree in journalism from Carleton University, with a minor in history, and is the president of the Eastern Canadian Farm Writers' Association.



## A Parent's Focus

By Andy Simon, EPCA Treasurer



Lately, Quebec parents, school boards and all their various organizations and associations have been through a long period of trial balloons and possible changes presented officially and unofficially by the Minister of Education. It truly has been and continues to be quite unsettling at best.

Looming school board mergers have been distracting school board officials from their real duties as administrators. Talks of putting an end to school board elections have put commissioners in a quandary as they struggle to deal with their newly expanded territorial responsibilities. All of the conflicting theories and news stories have parents wondering what is true and what isn't.

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA), like all stakeholders in education, is awash with these innuendos as it struggles to prepare for a myriad of possible contingencies. However, they are sure of the most basic concern and will not, in any event, lose sight of it. Regardless of what changes come to Quebec's education system, how will they impact the education of Quebec students? How will these structural changes improve or at least maintain the status quo of quality education?

Quality assurance concerns rise above all other considerations for the parents of Quebec. How will the regular stream, special education and gifted students be affected by all this? Over the past years, the many cuts to education have put a strain on a system struggling to remain relevant and effective for the students' needs at all levels.

Recent polls and the poor turnout of this past November's school board election are seen by the Ministry as clear indications that the public is not so in love with the way school boards are governed. As a result, all these trial balloons on mergers and governance are creating little

concern in the general public. This leaves teachers, administrators and commissioners amongst the only ones to react, having their own stakes to protect.

As parents, we are the stakeholders who have the most important interest: the success of our children in school and the future that education will provide them. This is not to say our educators do not also have the best interest of students in their hearts. It's just that parents have no other agenda but the welfare of their children, which hopefully is also the case of the Minister.

*The English Parents' Committee Association is a coalition of parents committees from English-language school boards across Quebec, representing nearly 85,000 students in the English language sector in the province. Decision-making at EPCA is based upon consensus building, listening to viewpoints and perspective from representatives of all of the member boards.*

Find out more at [www.epcaquebec.org](http://www.epcaquebec.org)



## Executive Appreciation Dinner: Socialize & Learn

The Executive Appreciation dinner on March 19th is the QFHSA's way of thanking the local association executive members for their hard work and dedication. It is a chance for them to come together for some fun.

This year's guest speaker will be Corey Szwarcok, of Dynamix. He will be working with the members in a few fun activities to boost team building.

### Building a successful Team with Corey Szwarcok

"A winning organization demands a cohesive team with a common goal. Understanding what makes a team successful will increase your ability to achieve greatness and take your organization to a higher level. In this fun and unique presentation, you will learn key elements to making your team stronger and more effective."

Location: Casa Greque, 13081 Boulevard Guoin Ouest, Pierrefonds, QC H8Z 1X1  
Time: 7:00 pm



## DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

### DEAR DM,

My son Tyler (not his real name) is a wonderful boy. At school everyone has good things to say: "Tyler's a great kid, the first to jump up and help others". Even though he does well at school, day after day I watch him suffer because he's so lonely... His only friend is his iPad he named "Charlie". How can I help my son make friends?

### DEAR—YOU GATTA HAVE FRIENDS...

It was a warm sunny Saturday afternoon when I first met Tyler's Mom. She entered DM's clinic with a serious face and a burdened heart. It took but a few minutes for her eyes to water as she shared her worries about her son Tyler. She spoke about the party invitations that did not come, the playdates that never worked out...and of her sweet loving son sitting at home alone. Like other parents, Tyler's Mom wanted her son to be happy, and to have a "friend".

At school Tyler does well academically, yet, day after day, he fails recess and lunchtime. He spends his free time walking around alone, watching other children laughing and having fun, like an outsider. Sometimes he even stands closeby to a group so it seems he's included. One night, as she tucked him into bed, Tyler asked his Mom if he would ever have a friend. Tyler's Mom could not bear to see her son's loneliness.

In contrast, "Marc", in Tyler's class, would probably say recess and lunchtime are his favourite times of the day. Marc is easy-going, likes to try new games, and when the inevitable conflicts

emerges, is able resolve the disagreement without hurting the friendship. It's no wonder that when there's a game to be played, a team member to be chosen, a party or playdate on the horizon, Marc's name is one of the first to be called. Marc is one of those lucky children whose brains seem to download social skills from his environment without conscious thought or effort. He doesn't even know it, but his social skills are a protective factor against social isolation.

Whether young or old, our friends provide us with support: their presence in our lives improves our well-being and mental health. It's within friendships that we hone our social skills – we learn how to relate to other human beings, how easily feelings get hurt, and about resilience. Research shows up to 50% of youth having difficulty managing relationships in childhood will continue to have difficulties in future relationships.

The good news for all the parents of Tylers out there is that with practice and direct teaching, children can improve their friendship skills. Tyler joined DM's social skills group based on solid research, and practiced skills he needed every week with same aged peers within the group setting.

Children who are more socially competent are more likely to take risks, problem solve, work together in a team, and manage their emotions when things don't go their way. DM offers groups to help young people learn the skills they need for success. Tyler may never be the centre of the group, but he never wanted that anyway: He just wanted a friend. Contact DM for more information – Together we can make a difference ! Sincerely, DM FAMILY SERVICES

**CONTACT DM !**

**514.483.9339**

**[www.dmfamilyschool.com](http://www.dmfamilyschool.com)**



 A photograph of a diverse group of children of various ethnicities and ages, all smiling and looking towards the camera. They are standing behind a white table.
 

**SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS & FRIENDSHIP CLUBS**

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN !**

 A small version of the DM Family & School Services logo is located in the bottom right corner of the image.

## The e-cigarette smokescreen: have you got the facts about vaping?

The popularity of e-cigarettes is definitely on the rise and while some people are using them as a strategy to butt out cigarette smoking for good, more and more people—including children and teens—who don't even smoke are taking up the e-cigarette habit. The fruity flavours and sophisticated image are two big factors that entice kids to try them but as you'll see in this issue, just because they don't have tobacco doesn't mean that they are a safe or smart choice.

### What parents should know about e-cigarettes

On the Top 10 list of things you never want your kids to try, smoking a cigarette is right up there. If your kids are older, chances are you've already had a conversation with them about the dangers of smoking. No matter what their age when you first talk about it, it's a good idea to revisit the subject as they navigate their high school years.



While you're at it, don't forget to talk about e-cigarettes too. These relatively new devices are becoming more and more popular, especially with people trying to reduce or eliminate their cigarette smoking habit. But new data shows that many young people are trying e-cigarettes even if they've never smoked regular cigarettes. And that can be the first step on a slippery slope towards forming a habit.

### E-cigarettes are harmless, right? Wrong.

If you've never used an e-cigarette, you probably haven't given much thought to how they work or what's in them. E-cigarettes are battery-operated devices with a heating element and a cartridge which holds liquid; the liquid can contain nicotine, flavourings and certain chemicals. When the user puffs on the device, the heating element is activated and the liquid is vaporized—thus the term 'vaping'.

Some types of e-cigarettes are disposable; some have rechargeable batteries and refillable cartridges. It's important to know that even though e-cigarettes don't burn—and therefore don't produce smoke—the liquids often contain nicotine. The other commonly used ingredients in the liquids, such as propylene glycol (PG), are approved for human consumption, but since e-cigarettes are still relatively new, there is no significant long-term data yet on the effects of inhaling the ingredients found in e-liquids.

There's a push for more and better regulation of the e-cigarette industry in Canada. Currently, e-cigarette devices and liquids are not officially approved for manufacture or sale but due to a lack of legislation in the category, they are readily available in "vape shops", convenience stores and online. Manufacturers can produce and sell e-liquids without submitting the products for testing, a fact which means you won't always know what's in them.

### Schoolyard 'vaping' on the rise

Many e-cigarette advertising campaigns tout the advantages of 'vaping' in public places where regular cigarette smoking is not allowed. Who would have imagined that the schoolyard would be one of those places? Studies published by the National Institutes of Health in the US, and the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, indicate that children as young as 11 years old have tried e-cigarettes. In Quebec, an estimated 5,000 grade 6 children have tried e-cigarettes and 142,000 secondary V students have tried them. The US data shows that even though regular smoking has decreased among school-aged children, the use of e-cigarettes has risen by 4 to 7 percent.

There is a bit of good news in all this: the provincial government has started to address the sale and use of e-cigarette products through legislation that will ban sales and promotion to minors, and ban e-cigarette use in schoolyards and other places where cigarette smoking is not allowed. In the meantime, make sure your kids know why you've just added 'vaping' to the Top 10 list.

*This information was originally published by the Montreal Children's Hospital*

**True or False: The sale and use of e-cigarettes in Canada is regulated by the government**

False.

Imagine you're sitting in your local café and the person beside you takes out an e-cigarette. Chances are, the liquid they're "vaping" has nicotine in it, and when they puff on the device, a little stream of vapour comes out. While this scenario might not be happening in every corner café, there's currently little in the way of e-cigarette regulation in Canada, so there's nothing to stop people from "lighting up" wherever they want.

Several interest groups in Canada have been pushing for the regulation of e-cigarettes, but there is still no legislation that governs the sale of e-cigarette devices or liquids used in the devices. Since the first e-cigarette products appeared in Canada less than a decade ago, Health Canada has issued one statement on the subject—and that was in 2009. The statement says that importing, marketing and advertising e-cigarettes, liquids and related products is not allowed without approval from Health Canada, primarily because these products need to be evaluated for safety and health claims (e.g. as an aide to stop smoking regular cigarettes). This hasn't stopped companies from entering the market though.

E-cigarettes are widely available online, and retail locations are opening up in many cities. Since the products are relatively new to Canada, governments at all levels still need to address the sale and use of the products, whether it's approving the ingredients in e-liquids, developing by-laws to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in public places, or banning the marketing and sale of the products to minors.

**Q: How does 'vaping' e-cigarettes differ from smoking traditional cigarettes?**

A: You don't have to look very far to see that the use of e-cigarettes—a practice known as vaping—is on the rise. Many people see e-cigarettes as a safe alternative to smoking regular cigarettes. So how do the two practices differ? And how are they the same?

Unlike regular cigarettes, e-cigarettes do not have tobacco. E-cigarettes are battery powered devices that have a heating element and a cartridge that contains liquid. Puffing on the device heats the liquid, which produces vapour. Compare this to regular cigarettes where puffing burns the tobacco and produces smoke—the big danger for the cigarette smoker and everyone around them—not to mention the tar and carbon monoxide that the smoker inhales.

The e-cigarette might seem harmless by comparison but taking a closer look at what's in the liquid raises other concerns. Like regular cigarettes, many e-liquids contain nicotine, even though nicotine for e-cigarettes is not officially approved in Canada. The liquids often contain other ingredients too, such as propylene glycol (PG), a popular food additive. They also come in hundreds of flavours such as strawberry, root beer and chai tea, which make them very tempting to children and teenagers.

The production and sale of e-liquids is not yet closely monitored in Canada, which means they may not always contain the ingredients and proportions listed on the label. What's more, the e-cigarette industry is still so young that there's no data on the long-term effects of inhaling e-liquids.

A key similarity between the two types of smoking that can't be ignored is that e-cigarettes mimic regular smoking. Public health officials are now speaking out about the dangers of making smoking acceptable again, a trend that could potentially roll back decades of work achieved by anti-smoking campaigns. E-cigarettes should never be viewed as a better way to start smoking. Pediatric specialists all agree that whether it's e-cigarettes or regular cigarettes, children, teens and adults should never take up smoking under any circumstance.



# Education under construction

By Kim Hamilton, Director of Communications and Special Projects, QESBA

The education sector in Quebec is currently undergoing a review by the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports Yves Bolduc. Since the November 4, 2014 School Board Elections, we have been buried in speculation and uncertainty on the future of our system. Both the Premier and the Minister made declarations during the electoral period basing the future of our structures on electoral turnout. Although the actual electoral turnout in the English sector was closer to 20%, the government only announces the average overall provincial turnout which was roughly 5%.

The first proposed step in what seems to be a multiple step scenario to be deposited this spring is merging school board territories. The Minister's proposal was to diminish the French boards from 60 to roughly 35 and to reduce our nine to seven.

Our position has been clear: nine is a sufficient number given the size of our territories and the 100,000 students we serve. If we compare Quebec to Ontario, we have the same number of minority language students and we have

nine boards to their 12 French boards. In the majority language sector, Ontario has 72 versus the actual 60 in Quebec.

QESBA and its' member boards have embarked upon an advocacy campaign to all 125 Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) with each of the nine boards sending to the MNAs on their territories and QESBA sending out to all provincial elected.

Each and every interested party has met with their local MNAs to explain our clear position—so far we are receiving positive feedback on our interventions. QESBA has even received a formal letter from the President of Fédération des commissions scolaires (FCSQ), Josée Bouchard in support of QESBA's position on maintaining nine school boards and she has reported as much to Minister's office.

The Minister has yet to formally respond to our position but he is set to decree school board territories in short order we should have formal notice soon.

In other possible scenarios to a change in legislation is governance. We are watching closely and will remain



vigilant in defending our school boards and we will be looking to our partners in English language education to mobilize further if warranted.

We call upon the members of QFHSA to contact their provincial politicians in an effort to mobilize across the province.

*The purpose of the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is to advocate appropriate education for students in both the youth and adult sectors and to enhance the effectiveness of school commissioners and member school boards in the areas of education, finance, administration and labour relations.*

## CSE reports on the state and needs of education

Last December, the Conseil Supérieur de l'éducation (CSE) prepared a "Report on the State and Needs of Education: 2012-2014" in which it outlined three primary recommendations for all stakeholders involved in education to consider.

The report reviewed curriculum reform over the last 15 years, such as the creation of full-time kindergarten for 5-year-olds, amalgamation of school boards, the adoption of governing boards, and more.

The CSE found overall that these reforms were all essential to the education system but were often "implemented in conjunction—and often fighting for attention with—other projects around the same time."

The report compared other French-speaking education systems in Europe that followed the same competency-based approach, and noticed they faced similar challenges, but continue to pursue the competency-based approach nonetheless.

Furthermore, stakeholders in Quebec were asked what they

felt the 'state and needs of education' were, and the general opinion was that the foundations of the reforms were essential, as well as the need to maintain them, even if some nuancing is still required. For example, "the evaluation of competencies is still an important hurdle for school players."

The three final recommendations were:

1. **To collectively reclaim the foundations of the curriculum and programs of study**, considering moral legitimacy as an important factor.
2. **To overcome deadlocks paralyzing progress on educational issues**, considering pragmatic legitimacy.
3. **To adopt a gradual and iterative approach to developing and implementing the curriculum and programs of study**, with regards to cognitive legitimacy.

The CSE believes that should these recommendations be taken to heart, they "could be catalysts of a true improvement in the quality of learning for Quebec students."



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## Quick tips: How to communicate effectively

Even if you have the right method of communication to reach your parents, they may still not be listening. It's not just about *what* you use to communicate, but *how* you communicate the message. Parents are inundated with newsletters, notices, emails, all sorts of communications they *have to* read, on top of the reading they want to do. So use these tips to help ensure your message gets across:

### 1. Keep it short and sweet

Looking at a full page of text in any format is daunting, and discourages the reader from taking the time to read the text.

### 2. Break it down

Whether you use lists, numbering or bullet systems, or create more white space, all of these tricks make it easier for your audience to read the information and organize it in their heads (just like this list of tips)

### 3. Use simple language

Everyone gets caught up in their own jargon, so make sure to simplify your terms, explain acronyms, and simply don't use big words. People don't have the time to look up words and the last thing you want is for them to guess the meaning of a word.

### 4. Make it appealing

There's a fine line between using too many fonts and sizes to emphasize every important point on your page, and organizing the information in terms



of essential information. Generally, keep to using one font, use bold for subtitles, and italics to emphasize keywords. Rarely do you need to use both bold and italics on the same text. Too many changes are distracting and difficult to read.

Adding images and block quotes help create white space to give the eyes a break while also enhancing the appeal of the visual details.

### 5. Make a lead

This is an old journalism trick, when writing a story, every journalist makes sure that all the essential information about that story is provided in the first sentence. On top of that, the sentence is no longer than 40 words. In the same way someone reading a newspaper is going to decide to read the article in the first sentence, your parents will do the same for the information you send them.

## eBooks: Useful, harmful or simply unnecessary? (cont'd)

*(Continued from page 5)*

experience with the format than the parents and sometimes this leads to conflict. The parent and child must negotiate a new routine for reading and playing with the ebook.

There is starting to be more research about whether ebooks help children to learn language and literacy skills. There is a possibility that special features in ebooks such as an interactive dictionary will help children connect text to meaning. There is also a possibility that engaging features such as animations distract children from the story and interfere with learning. More research is needed to understand the effect of ebooks on learning. It seems that the specific nature of the interactive features and the way that they are linked to text and story may

be important. We hope that researchers can help designers build better ebooks for young children.

On June 26 and 27, 2015 we will have a conference at McGill University, "Digital Literacy for Preschoolers: Maximizing the Benefits of eBooks for Emergent Literacy". Please go to [digitalmediaprojectforchildren.wordpress.com](http://digitalmediaprojectforchildren.wordpress.com) or write to us at [cpl.scsd@McGill.ca](mailto:cpl.scsd@McGill.ca) if you would like more information. We welcome parents to the conference.

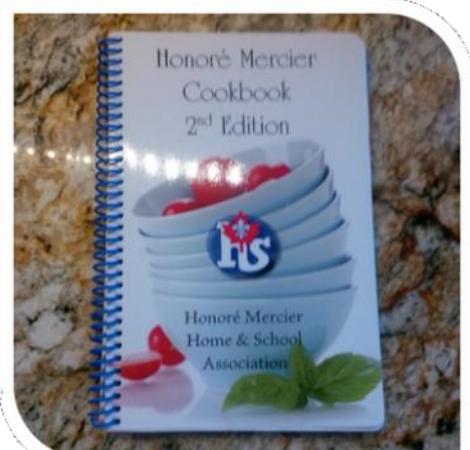
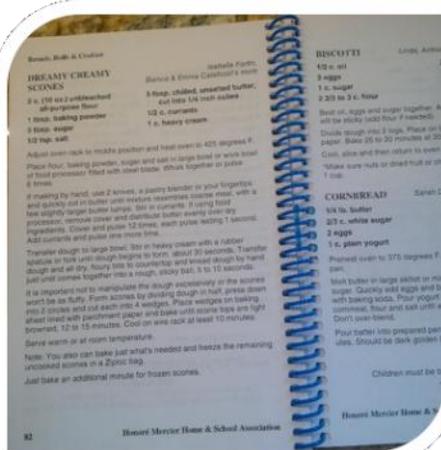
# Focus on the Locals

## The Honoré Mercier 2nd Edition Cookbook

Have you tried Isabelle's scones?  
Apparently they are dreamy!

Why not put together all our families' recipes in one book. Share them with our community, with our friends....

Thanks to a small group of volunteers this fundraising project was a great accomplishment. Great food, great people, great friendships!



### “WHERE’S MY SCHOOL?”

Disappointed that your school is not on the Focus on the Locals pages? Please talk to your Home and School members to submit the wonderful things your association is doing for our next issue in May 2015 (deadline May 8, 2015), to [news@qfhsa.org](mailto:news@qfhsa.org)

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# Beacon Hill

## Annual Book Fair

In November 2014, the H & S coordinated the annual Scholastic Book Fair to coincide with parent-teacher interviews. Over 2 days, 24 volunteers and many shoppers helped to raise over \$1000 to go towards book purchases for our school library as well as another \$1000 directly to the classrooms. Happy reading everyone!

## Hip Hop Day

We invited H4L to the school for the students to move on the sound of Hip Hop before the Holidays Break last December. From Kindergarten to Grade 6, it was amazing and fun to see all the children participating and dancing to the latest radio hits. The morning was a success especially with some teachers tagging along.

## Open House Activities

This January 20th & 21st, our grade 6 ambassadors gave tours to visiting families and their children during the annual open house. Eight proud parents took turns accompanying our very well-spoken grade 6-ers, answering questions wherever appropriate. It was great to see our graduating students show such pride in their school, and express what it is they love about Beacon Hill.

## Teacher Appreciation Week

The week of February 2nd our students and parents chose a Superhero theme to celebrate their appreciation for their staff. To kick off the week, parent volunteers supplied food and a homemade theme cake for a relaxed luncheon for all 50 staff members. Superman logo notes of thanks written by the students complimented the myriad of Superhero decorations put up throughout the school. The cold weather has not slowed down our great spirit! Coming up soon will be our Winter Carnival and everyone is really excited to create our ice wall.



# Hillcrest Academy



## Children Helping Children

Hillcrest Academy was honored by the new Montreal Children's Hospital for their outstanding fundraising efforts. On the last Friday of every month, Hillcrest students relax and dress down for a good cause. Children bring in 2\$ and all proceeds for the past 3 years have gone to the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation. At the beginning of this year, Hillcrest had already raised over \$15,000 with more to come for this year. The students are so proud to be helping sick children, and as parents we all know how important having the best hospital for our children there when we need it.



## Frosty Fun

Every year HAUSA (Hillcrest Academy Home and School) funds a huge holiday Fun Fair. There are inflatables, carnival games and even a mascot! The pyjama day starts with a holiday breakfast where parent volunteers, most in their own pyjamas, help deliver breakfasts to the classrooms. Then throughout the day, students get to play, bounce and dance in their very own Fairground (otherwise known as the school gym!). There is laughter and fun for everyone. This year there was even Frosty the Snowman present to greet the little ones! A wintery blast was had by all!

# Wilder Penfield Elementary

## Holiday Craft Fair

Thank you to all who volunteered their time and their creativity in making our Holiday Fair a success. A great time was had by all. A very special thank you to Heather Martin for all her hard work in organising this fun event!



## Wilder Penfield Food Drive

Once again, our Wilder Community came out to answer the call in helping others. Thank you to Mrs. Rosalie for organising this food drive to help the community at St. Lawrence Academy School and thank you to all the parent volunteers who took time out to sort, pack and drive.



# Busy as a bee at Flemming Elementary

What a great start to the New Year for our Home and School. First, let me just rewind a couple of months when we kicked off Halloween with a spooky Boo Bash dance. What a great time we all had with door prizes, games, a haunted house and beautifully carved pumpkins.... It was spooktacular!!! Not too far away after the Boo Bash was our Annual Christmas movie morning with freshly baked cookies and wonderful gifts for all our students. We were able to provide these very much appreciated gifts with our numerous fundraisers (fun raisers): bake sales, pizza lunches and chicken burger lunches.

Our Home and School is very proud to mention that with the help of staff members and teachers, we are able to provide donations to various foundations. These donations make us and the students very grateful to be fortunate enough to help others.

Giving the gift of reading! Literacy Night was one of the most recent events we participated in. This successful evening was fun for the whole family with games, literature and cultural teachings.

Our Home and School is very active at Flemming Elementary and when we hear the cheers of the children it makes every minute worth it!



# South Hull Elementary

For the second year, South Hull has been part of the Destination Imagination challenge program. The program teaches the creative process by allowing teams to solve Challenges together as a team. A big part of our program is the Interference policy: in short, kids have to imagine, create and develop solutions on their own. Parents, Team Managers, family and friends can't suggest ideas or force teams in certain directions. Outsiders can only facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge.

Students have fun and gain confidence in their ability to solve any challenge. In working to solve our Challenges, teams learn 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, citizenship and courage) to build on their unique strengths.

South Hull's team "The Master Thinker's", which was composed of 7 students from grade 5-6 (Kelly Malone, Ella Provost-John, Ayla Chabassol, Renée Howard, Brooklyn Fequet, Jérémy Poole and Mikaël St-Germain) and their team

manager (Lyne Chartrand, daycare educator) were awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place and also was awarded a certificate for as a superior role model in spirit, sportsmanship and volunteerism.



# Family Fun & Fundraising at Genesis

This year, Genesis is taking on many projects to help raise funds for the installation of 2 sections of turf in the schoolyard for the children to enjoy.

This past December, Genesis held their very first Holiday Fair in order to support this project. On Sunday, December 13, the school was host to 25 vendors, entrepreneurs, and artisans who had much success in selling their goods to the community at large. Home and School also added their own tables: selling baked goods,

raffle tickets, popcorn and books for a buck! As an added bonus, Santa was there to graciously take pictures with all the kids. It was a fantastic event that brought friends and families together

outside of school hours and raised money that will go towards the turf.

Genesis Home and School will also be hosting their first Family Fun Night on Friday, February 20th. The students along with their families and friends will come together to watch a movie in the Gym. They will be invited to bring in their own chairs, sleeping bags, mats, etc. Our hard working volunteers will be selling refreshments, snacks, and TCBY yogurt. This promises to be a fun filled event that will bring the Genesis community closer together.

Lastly, on Friday March 27<sup>th</sup>, Genesis Home and School will be host to a Comedy Night Fundraiser held in the community church basement, Our Lady of Divine Love in Duvernay, Laval. Each ticket will cost \$40, and will include a hot and cold buffet style meal, along with a night filled with plenty of laughter with a great line up of comedians that are well known in the Montreal comedy scene. This event wouldn't be possible without the help of our generous sponsors who contributed in many ways, including providing raffle prizes!

The Genesis Home and School volunteers have been working hard to get the turf installed for their children. We are hoping to reach our goal!

# Edgewater Elementary



It may be frigidly cold outside, but inside Edgewater Elementary it is very warm, welcoming & full of kindness! Our school has just completed the "Great Kindness Challenge". Our students joined over 2, 000, 000 students across North America in completing a list of kind tasks. Before the madness of the holidays started, we hosted our annual Craft Fair on Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup>. Due to our devoted treasurer & craft fair coordinator Pavolina Owczar, this year's fair was an outstanding realization. Many thanks to our brilliant principal Liz Rivard who organized a "booster" table to encourage student/family attendance and also to collect non-perishable food items for our Christmas basket gathering. The class with the most participants won a pizza lunch & \$100 worth of books. Way to go Mme Prevost's Grade 4 homeroom!

As soon as we were done cleaning up after the Christmas craft fair, some of our loyal volunteers were busy preparing for the next event the following week; the Scholastic book fair! During the day each classroom visits the book fair. It remained open throughout that evening for "Portfolio Night" so parents also have the opportunity to browse.

We started the New Year off in Mid-January with the literacy celebration by holding an event on January 25<sup>th</sup> in honor of all things related to the love of reading. We are fortunate to have one of the loveliest teachers at our school organize this special occasion for the last three years. You are a treasure Mrs. Anto! Students & their families are invited to come to the school to play board games, make a book mark, & check out our used book table.

Along with the literacy event, we invite new babies born the past year from our community to join in the fun as part of "Born to Read". Each baby is presented with a small canvas tote bag filled with new books from Scholastic.

Our Home & school committee is especially occupied with upcoming projects such as "Teacher Staff Appreciation Week" and "Oh how we love our teachers & Staff!" The week before the March break we will have our "Anti-Bullying" campaign week with "Pink T-Shirt" day and a special assembly on February 25<sup>th</sup>. We will also be beginning our Spring Fundraiser campaign. Thereafter, our "Spring Shop Fest" will be held on March 28<sup>th</sup>. It has been quite an active & amusing year for us thus far as we continue to celebrate our school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

# Baie Comeau High School

A small school with a big heart! With the participation Student Parliament of Baie-Comeau High School, families and staff were pleased to contribute non perishable food to the charity L'Accueil Marie l'Incarnation. Students and friends of BCHS wish the population of Baie-Comeau, and all QFHSA members a wonderful holiday!



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### Contest Deadlines

**Famous Family Recipes**

March 20, 2015

**An Island of Stories**

April 30, 2015

**Family Treasures**

May 9, 2015

### Dates to Remember

**March 8, 2015 - Disney on Ice "FROZEN"**

for our Lucky Contest Winners

**March 12, 2015 - Regional Council meeting for the EMSB schools**

(at the QFHSA Office)

**March 19, 2015 - Executive Appreciation Dinner**

Casa Greque, 13081 Boulevard Gouin Ouest, Pierrefonds, QC H8Z 1X1 starting at 7:00 pm.

### Looking Ahead....

**May 2, 2015 QFHSA AGM & Awards Banquet**

**May 8, 2015 - News Deadline**

The next deadline for the QFHSA newsletter (advertising, Focus on the Locals and other news)



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## QFHSA NEWS

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