

VOLUME 62 ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2024

QFHSA NEWS

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL MEMBERS

It's
Summer at
Last!

In This Issue...

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Celebrating Excellence

Inspiring volunteers & educators, p. 8-14

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Local associations make joyful memories, p. 3, 21-23



The Quebec
Federation of
Home and School
Associations

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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.

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All QFHSA Awards Luncheon photos by Howard Kay

A huge thank you to the local Home and School Associations that shared their photos for this issue.

CORRECTION: On page 23 of the Spring 2024 issue (print edition), Westwood High was incorrectly identified as Westwood Elementary. The QFHSA apologizes for the error.

We welcome your letters!

You are invited to send us your comments/suggestions on this edition of the *QFHSA News* by email to news@qfhsa.org.



Thanks for the Memories!

It has been another exceptional year of activity at our local Home and School Associations. From first-day-of-school fun to year-end barbecues and carnivals and everything in between, Home and School volunteers have done a tremendous job of enriching the lives of students, school staff, and families. It has been a real joy for the QFHSA to hear about your adventures.

On this page, you'll find photos from the year from our local Home and School communities. *The smiles on the students' and volunteers' faces say it all.*

Thank you to every single Home and School volunteer for giving so generously of your time and energy for your school communities. You are our heroes!

The QFHSA Board of Directors and Staff



School's Out for Summer!

A Message from the QFHSA's President

SCHOOL'S OUT AND IT'S SUMMERTIME! You have all worked so hard preparing BBQs, teacher/staff appreciation, school activities, photo sessions, movie nights, and more.

Our schools and students wouldn't be the same without your passion and dedication putting together bake sales, car washes, and fundraising to purchase library books, laptops, gym equipment, and whatever else is needed to make schools fun and safe.

Thank you so much. I wish we at the QFHSA could visit each and every association and shake hands with all our volunteers. You're the best! I wish you all a beautiful, peaceful and relaxing vacation.

The office will be closed from June 28th until August 19th but you can always contact me at president@qfhsa.org if you have any questions.

Stay safe.

Rosemary Murphy



Group photo from Adobe Stock, child photo by Mixail Mingazov from Pixabay,



CONGRATULATIONS

To All of Our Graduates!



KINDERGARTEN



Grade 6



Secondary V

2024

Dates to Remember

Friday, June 28	QFHSA Office Closes for the Summer
Monday, July 15	President's and Treasurer's Reports Due
Monday, August 19	QFHSA Office Reopens
August 28, 29, or 30	It's the First Day Back to School! (Check your school's calendar for your first day.)
September 30 (or sooner if possible)	New Executive Lists Due
September/October	Executive Training Workshops (Online)

Making those Resolutions Count

A Message from the Executive Director



A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who heeded the call and represented their Home and School Associations at this year's virtual Annual General Meeting. We had a record turnout, numbers we have not seen in 20 years!

It warmed our hearts! When half our membership shows up and adopts resolutions, we are in a better position to say we represent the voice of our parent members.

The resolutions emanating from this year's Annual General Meeting deal with issues of minority language rights in Quebec and the health and welfare of our children and youth in public schools. I encourage you to reread the resolutions and consider them carefully.

Resolution 2024-05 expresses our support of the cellphone ban in schools. The resolution also calls for more in-school education on the proper use of social media. This educational approach, we believe, would be far more effective than simply dealing out punitive measures on those who do not respect the ban.

As Resolution 2024-04 applauds the introduction of an in-school meal program for all students, we encourage

your members to help and support your school in implementing this new program as well.

As Resolutions 2024-01, 2024-02, and 2024-03 deal with minority language rights, we encourage you to support them in any way you can. Write to your local MNA, cast a ballot in the upcoming November school board elections, and if you would like to improve your command of the French language, take advantage of the resources available in your area.

Our resolutions are a reflection of what is going on in the education system at this current time. Part of our mandate is to educate our members and keep them informed. In one of the earliest formats of the *QFHSA News*, it was labelled as "a magazine for thoughtful parents." We encourage you to continue to be thoughtful parents. Be aware of what is going on around you and behind the scenes and do what you can to support our students.

Enjoy the summer. You have all earned it.

Carol Meindl

Congratulations to Samantha Patel, EMSB Volunteer of Distinction

On April 30th, Samantha Patel received a very special honour from the English Montreal School Board. She was one of only three people selected to receive a 2024 EMSB Volunteer of Distinction Award. Samantha has dedicated countless hours to Merton Elementary.

The QFHSA is fortunate to also benefit from Samantha's exceptional talents in her many roles at our Federation: board member, committee member, and all-round helper to all.

Summer at the QFHSA

Please Note: **The QFHSA Office will be closed starting on Friday, June 28th and will reopen on Monday, August 19th.**

However, if you need to reach us some time this summer, do not hesitate to email info@qfhsa.org.

Have a wonderful summer!

News from our 80th Annual General Meeting



The 2024 AGM: A Time to Gather, A Time to Reflect

A RECORD NUMBER of local Home and School Associations participated in the QFHSA's 80th Annual General Meeting on the evening of May 29th. From Grosse-Île to Wakefield, from Chambly to Laval, over 40 delegates from local Home and School Associations logged in to the Zoom meeting. They were joined by volunteers and staff from the Federation along with several special guests. The evening's agenda included a review of the financial picture, the Federation's by-laws, and the year's activities; a discussion of the 2024 proposed resolutions; and the election of the QFHSA's 2024/25 board of directors.

One of the first orders of business was a discussion of the proposed changes to the Federation's by-laws. The QFHSA's Constitution/By-Laws Committee recommended the following major changes:

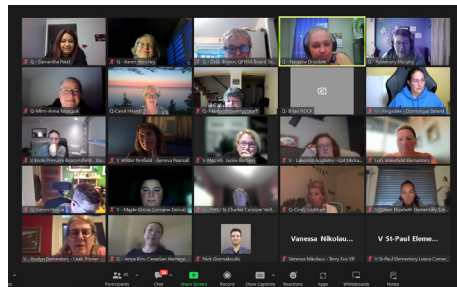
- Reduce the maximum number of directors on the QFHSA's board to 15 (down from 20)
- Remove one vice-president position from the QFHSA's slate of officers to reflect the smaller board size

All of the proposed changes were adopted.

QFHSA Treasurer Leah Trineer led a review of the 2023 financial year and the auditor's financial statements. She also presented the proposed budget for the 2025 year.

In her review of the financial statements for the fiscal year ending De-

cember 31, 2023, Leah noted the increase in family Home and School memberships, a very good development. She also shared more good news: the QFHSA received additional funding from Canadian Heritage. However, rising costs are a real concern, especially the QFHSA's ever-increasing insurance fees.



Zooming in to the QFHSA's AGM

Each year, the QFHSA prepares a Book of Reports for the Annual General Meeting. It is a compilation of all the year-end documents prepared by the QFHSA's committee members and staff. The auditor's financial statements are included in the book as well. This year's Book of Reports was accepted at the Annual General Meeting and is now available on our website, qfhsa.org. From the Home page, select "Events," then "Annual General Meeting." You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/3xeChWC>.

Resolutions Adopted

At the meeting, the QFHSA's Resolutions Subcommittee presented five resolutions. Created over the course of the year by members of the QFHSA's Education and Rights Subcommittees, the resolutions address the latest developments in Quebec education and politics that affect our parents and students. The

resolutions cover the following:

- **Resolution 2024-01:**
[French Instruction Availability](#)
It was presented by Debi Brown.
- **Resolution 2024-02:**
[The Far-Reaching Effects of Tuition Fee Increases on Québec's English Universities](#)
It was presented by Cindy Lockhart.
- **Resolution 2024-03:**
[Permanent English Voters' List for School Board Elections](#)
It was presented by Rosemary Murphy.
- **Resolution 2024-04:**
[Provincial In-School Food Program](#)
It was presented by Natasha Drysdale.
- **Resolution 2024-05:**
[Cellphone Ban](#)
It was presented by Brian Rock.

Please see the above list for the text of each resolution. The resolutions can be found on our website, qfhsa.org. From the Home page, select "Advocating for Our Parents and Community," then "Resolutions," then "2024 Resolutions."

80 Years Strong!

How does a non-profit organization dedicated to the Quebec Home and School movement thrive for 80 years? It is through the hard work

Continued on the next page

News from our 80th Annual General Meeting

Annual General Meeting

Continued from the previous page

and tenacity of many. Over the years, volunteers in local Home and School Associations have lifted up their schools and built exceptional learning communities for students and staff alike. At the Federation, volunteers and staff have supported the efforts of local volunteers and advocated for all: children, parents, educators, and the community at large.

Despite a number of challenges, including increased expenses and deep concerns about the welfare of Québec's minority English community, the QFHSA remains resolute in its commitment to the Home and School movement and to building unity and strengthening community.

Karen Henchey,
Communications Officer



Dr. S.E. McDowell
Elementary

(Western Quebec School Board)

As the QFHSA's 80th Annual General Meeting drew to a close, there was a draw for a \$150 Amazon gift card from among the Home and Schools in attendance.

Congratulations
to
McDowell Home and School!

Images from Adobe Stock

Introducing... The 2024-2025 Board of Directors

This year's Annual General Meeting saw the re-election of Board Members Debi Brown, Natasha Drysdale, Cindy Lockhart, and Rosemary Murphy. In a very welcome development, there were two nominations to the board from the floor. The nominees, Jacqueline Barbieri and Caroline Veillette, were both elected to two-year terms.

With the addition of board members in the midst of their mandates, the QFHSA's board of directors for 2024-2025 is as follows:

Rosemary Murphy, *President*
Natasha Drysdale, *Executive Vice-President*
Samantha Patel, *Vice-President*
Wanda Leah Trineer, *Treasurer*
Debi Brown, *Secretary*
Linton Garner, *Immediate Past President (ex officio)*

Directors:

Jacqueline Barbieri	Cindy Lockhart
Elizabeth "Bobbi" Brown	Brian Rock
Nick Giannakoulis	Ginette Sauvé-Frankel
Ahmed Hassan	Caroline Veillette

Outgoing director Chris Schaler was thanked for his three years of service on the QFHSA's board.



Reminder... The English School Board Elections Will Take Place on November 3, 2024

The Quebec government's Law 40 attempted to abolish Quebec's English school boards, replacing them with English-language service centres. Thanks to the legal challenge initiated by the Quebec English School Boards Association, our English school boards remain intact. However, they need your help. **Show your support by voting at the school board elections.**

Visit your school board's website for more information and to verify that your name and the names of all the eligible voters in your family are on the voters' list.

Our English education system needs you!

2024 Awards Luncheon: A Celebration



Memories from the 2024 Awards Luncheon



THE LAST SATURDAY IN MAY was beautiful and sunny, the perfect day for a luncheon celebration. On that day, close to 70 people gathered at the Novotel in Ville St. Laurent for the QFHSA's annual awards event.

Members of the QFHSA's staff and board of directors were happy to welcome Home and School members from schools in Côte St-Luc, Westmount, Ville St-Laurent, LaSalle, Pierrefonds, Laval, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Pincourt, St. Lazare, and Aylmer.

A special thank you to all who joined us from west of the island of Montreal.

Unfortunately, this happened to be one of the weekends when the Île-aux-Tourtes Bridge was completely closed.

The QFHSA was also very pleased to welcome several special guests to the event. Joining us from the Lester B. Pearson School Board were Parent Commissioner Alaina Charszan and Commissioner Allison Saunders. Also in attendance were David Meloche, Director General of the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA); Lori Newton, President of the Montreal Teachers Association (MTA); and Lina Shoumarova, Research Associate with the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCEN) at Concordia University. Together, our guests helped us to pay tribute to this year's award recipients.



Our hosts, Natasha Drysdale and Debi Brown

Our hosts for the occasion, QFHSA Board Members Debi Brown and Natasha Drysdale, expertly guided us through the event. Shortly after 1 p.m., the awards ceremony got underway with the presentation of this year's major awards to five very deserving individuals: Ginette Sauvé-Frankel (*Buzzell Award*); Heidi Yetman (*Gordon Paterson Award*); Melanie Hogan (*Lewis Peace Prize*); and Angel Johnson and Tracy Witzke (*Winners of the Home and School Volunteer of the Year Award at the high school and elementary levels*).

Congratulations also went out to Cris Baluch, editor of the Forest Hill Elementary Home and School newsletter, and her team. They received the 2024 QFHSA Newsletter Award. Westwood High's Home and School received the 2024 QFHSA Membership Award. Westwood Membership Chair Anita Tso was congratulated for her excellent recruitment efforts.

This year, local Home and School Associations recognized 46 Golden Torch leaders as well as 72 Unsung Heroes. The QFHSA was very happy to be able to congratulate the Golden Torch and Unsung Hero award recipients attending the event. *On the following pages of this newsletter, you will find more information about this year's award winners.*

Attendees listened with rapt attention to the lovely tributes and moving acceptance speeches. Although no children were present, it was clear that our children were very much on our volunteers' minds. Throughout the ceremony, volunteers explained

the motivation behind their amazing dedication and tireless work for their school communities with these words: "We do this for our children and the school staff." But clearly another group benefits as well, the parents themselves. Deep and lasting friendships can be made, as evidenced by the camaraderie, laughter, and tears at the event.



Lori Newton accepts the Gordon Paterson Award on behalf of Heidi Yetman

At one point in the ceremony, it was announced that there was a golden ticket under one chair at each table. It revealed the winner of the table's plant centerpiece. This brought a good deal of excitement as guests scrambled to find the winners!

What is on the agenda for next year? The format of this year's event, a Saturday luncheon, was a departure from the usual evening banquet. When planning next year's event, the QFHSA events team will carefully review all the feedback received from the post-event survey.

Whatever form next year's awards celebration takes, this moment, this coming together of QFHSA board, staff, guests, and Home and School members is a tradition well worth keeping. Our Home and School volunteers deserve recognition for the enormous contributions they make to our schools. *That fact is abundantly clear.*

Karen Henchey,
Communications Officer

2024 Awards Luncheon: A Celebration



Rosemary Murphy, Ginette Sauv -Frankel, Leah Trineer



Children's World Academy



Rosemary Murphy with Tracy Witzke and Gina Giambalvo, St. Patrick's Elementary



St. Charles Elementary



Macdonald High School



Terry Fox Elementary (Laval)



Cedarcrest Elementary



Rosemary Murphy with Angel Johnson and Lisa St-Jacques, Westwood High



Edgewater Elementary



Crestview Elementary



St. Patrick's Elementary



Gardenview Elementary



Debi Brown, Melanie Hogan, and Marissa Berthiaume celebrate at Poltimore Elementary



Special guests join QFHSA board and staff members



Merton Elementary

Our 2024 Award Winners



Ginette Sauvé-Frankel

The Leslie N. Buzzell Award recognizes an individual for their outstanding service at the provincial level. It is given to a QFHSA board or committee member for their long-standing leadership and dedication to promoting and furthering the QFHSA's mission.

Throughout her volunteer and professional life, **Ginette Sauvé-Frankel** has been an outstanding advocate for our children, our schools, and the Home and School movement. During her 11-year tenure as a commissioner with the English Montreal School Board, she worked on several important initiatives, including the Green Plan Committee (which she chaired for 7 years), the Roots of Empathy Committee, and the Education Committee.

From 2003 to 2014, she was a member of the board of directors of the Quebec English School Boards

Association, where she worked on the group's Education Commission and Executive Committee.

Ginette joined the QFHSA's board of directors in 2015. As a QFHSA director, she has given countless hours of service to our provincial federation and continues to do so to this day. She has also volunteered her time and talents at the Canadian Home and School Federation.

Ginette's powerful commitment to the well-being of our children and communities is also evident in her work with UNICEF Canada's Rights Respecting Schools Program, the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children, Habitat for Humanity, and others. When accepting the award, Ginette described her love for children and her firm commitment to them. She explains: "Every child has the right to grow and become outstanding."

A formidable advocate for our children, a wonderful volunteer, and a treasured board member, Ginette is the perfect choice for the QFHSA's Leslie N. Buzzell Award.



Heidi Yetman

The Gordon Paterson Award recognizes an outstanding educator who has given long service to Quebec education and has encouraged the participation of parents.

For over 20 years, **Heidi Yetman** was a remarkable teacher, inspiring students in the areas of visual arts and science. This passion for teaching and education led her to take on an additional vocation: tremendous (and tireless) champion for the teaching profession.

Her advocacy work began in earnest in 2016 when she took on the role of president of the Pearson Teachers Union. By 2019, she was named president of the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT). Heidi represented Quebec teachers well during trying times—contract negotiations and a global pandemic and its aftermath. In 2022, Heidi was named president designate of the Canadian Teachers' Federation and was part of the Canadian delegation at the 2024 International Summit on the Teaching Profession in Singapore.

As a teacher and as an advocate, Heidi has long recognized the huge role parents play in their children's education. She writes, "I've always believed that parents are the most important partners in education. When teachers and parents collaborate, students thrive, and communities become stronger. As a teacher, building trust and understanding with parents were essential to ensuring the best learning conditions possible for my students."

Heidi also has a great appreciation for the Home and School parents she met during her teaching years. She explains: "These parents were highly dedicated to the school community. More importantly they made us feel valued. This is so very important, especially in these post pandemic times with student needs on the rise and systemic underfunding in education. I would like to thank all the parents who devote time and energy to their children's school community. You make a difference."

There can be no doubt that Heidi Yetman herself has made and continues to make a difference for Quebec students, educators, and school communities. We all benefit immensely from the Heidi Yetmans of the world.

Our 2024 Award Winners

The Home and School Volunteer of the Year Award is given to a long-time Home and School volunteer who encourages parents to get involved in their children's educations; promotes harmonious relations among parents, staff, administration and volunteers; is reliable, "indispensable," and professional; and adds value to Home and School life. This year, the QFHSA was proud to present the award to two very deserving volunteers.



Angel Johnson,
Westwood High School

"Angel Johnson is not just the president of our wonderful Home and School Association, but its heart."

Leeann Moss

Kind, hard-working, calm, humble, a pillar of strength, encouraging, reliable, a true star.

These are some of the words the volunteers and staff at Westwood High School have used to describe **Angel Johnson**. Indeed, Angel is the kind of volunteer who brings her enthusiasm (and strong work ethic) to every project she embarks on for Home and School. And there have been many! From smaller Home and School initiatives to large craft fairs to spectacular teacher/staff appreciation weeks, this Volunteer of the Year consistently goes above and beyond for her school community.

Angel is the sort of volunteer who can be counted on to figure out the best layout for an event, provide baked

goods for specific dietary needs, host gift-wrapping parties in her home, and dedicate hours upon hours at school during Home and School events to ensure all is well.

An exceptional team leader, Angel inspires and uplifts with her enthusiasm and positivity. Westwood Home and School Treasurer Leeann Moss describes Angel's "incredible way of uniting all of us members, encouraging us to give our all." Westwood Home and School Secretary Lisa St-Jacques describes Angel as a maestro of fostering harmonious relations who has created an environment where everyone feels valued and appreciated. True to her nature, Angel accepted her award with these inspiring words: "Each parent plays a vital role in the future of our schools and together, we can make a difference."

In her years at Westwood, Angel has helped to make Westwood High School a wonderful community where students can thrive, parent participation is valued, and staff are wonderfully appreciated. A wonderful world indeed.



Tracy Witzke,
St. Patrick Elementary

"Tracy Witzke shows up for the people in her life, and St. Patrick Elementary, our students, and our Home and School, have benefited from her showing up since her oldest child (who graduates from high school this year) started Kindergarten."

Mary Kate Jackson

Truly irreplaceable are the words used to describe St. Patrick's **Tracy Witzke**. She is the kind of volunteer you absolutely want on your team. Home and School President Mary Kate Jackson describes Tracy as "...the person who steps in when no one else can, the one who says, 'Let me know if you need anyone,' the one who sees that something needs to be done, and does it with no fanfare." Quietly but so competently, Tracy does indeed get things done—helping out on Pizza and Subway Days, making Costco runs for supplies, overseeing the inventory of the school's emergency food pantry, managing chocolate bar

fundraisers, working on the St. Patrick playground project, and so much more.

Throughout her long service to St. Patrick Home and School, Tracy never sought the limelight, seeking instead to deflect any praise that came her way or include others in that praise. In her beautiful tribute at the awards ceremony, Home and School Vice-President Gina Giambalvo said, "Tracy exemplifies the kind of volunteer and human we all need in our lives." It says a lot about Tracy that the St. Patrick's executive team held an emergency meeting to figure out what in the world they will do without her. At the awards ceremony, Tracy spoke movingly of her dedication to the St. Patrick community and her gratitude for the friends she has made. She summed up her motivation for all those years of volunteering with these five words: "This is about our kids." It will be a very sad day when the Witzke family moves back to Western Canada, but you can be sure that the St. Patrick community will long remember their Irreplaceable Tracy.

Our 2024 Award Winners



Principal Melanie Hogan,
Poltimore Elementary

Melanie Hogan works very hard to foster an atmosphere of caring and kindness for the student population. With less than 50 students at the school, in Grades K-4 to 6, this is a small rural school, but one with a very big heart. It is the type of school where children look out for one another in the school yard; one where *every* student is accepted and their individualities embraced.

Principal Hogan helps to build a learning environment at Poltimore that encourages every child to reach their full potential. At the school, each student joins a small

The Lewis Peace Prize
recognizes an individual or group who contributes to a safe and peaceful school or community.

At Poltimore Elementary in Val des Monts, Principal



group or "pride." Each wildcat pride is composed of students from different grade levels. Pride members work together to support one another, even the littlest members of the group. Thanks to the efforts of Melanie Hogan, children attending Poltimore Elementary learn in a peaceful, supportive environment.

Principal Hogan also encourages students to spread the kindness out in the larger community by connecting with seniors at a local residence. Students have even been known to share their Halloween candy with their senior friends!

With this caring and nurturing start to their educational adventures, the future can only be bright for students at Poltimore Elementary.



The 2024 Newsletter Prize

Congratulations to Forest Hill Elementary Home and School Association, this year's recipient of the QFHSA Newsletter Prize.

Cris Baluch, editor, and her wonderful team of Lisa Davignon, Nicole De Cairos, Jennifer Pearcey, and Iva Senicnjak are creating exceptional newsletters. They are beautifully constructed, full of useful information, and an absolute joy to read.

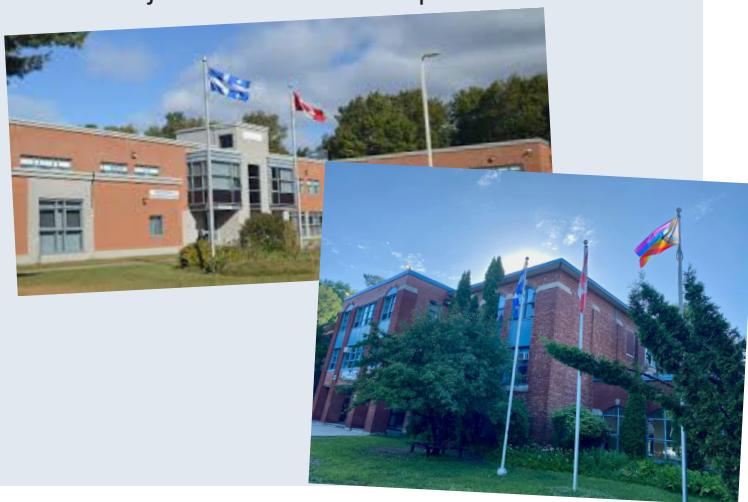
**Congratulations,
Forest Hill Home and
School Association!**



The 2024 Membership Prize

This year, the QFHSA reinstated the Membership Prize after a short pandemic hiatus. The award recognizes the successful efforts of a local Home and School Association to increase Home and School membership.

In 2023-24, Westwood High's Home and School Association Membership Chair Anita Tso and her team did an absolutely amazing job. They significantly increased Home and School memberships at their school, which has both a junior and senior campus.



Our 2024 Award Winners



The 2024 Golden Torch Award Recipients



Every year, the QFHSA invites local Home and School Associations to share the names of the leaders in their midst. Golden Torch volunteers lead with dedication, enthusiasm, and positivity. They encourage and embrace the participation of all volunteers, and their organizational skills and strong work ethic are outstanding. These are the names of this year's 46 Golden Torch Award recipients.

Cedarcrest Elementary

Karen Der, Paraskevi Papacostas

Children's World Academy

Erica Caruso, Gianna Caucci, Michelle Colavincenzo,
Tamara Dell'Olio, Kimberly Jones, Nathalie Tremblay,
Teresa Verelli

Dorval Elementary

Tina Frascarelli

Edgewater Elementary

Tara Cheevers, Kim Chiasson

Edinburgh Elementary

Vanessa Gangai

Forest Hill Elementary

Cris Baluch, Asia Clarke, Lisa Davignon,
Wendy Entwistle, Jennifer Goldfinch, Suzanne Guth

Lord Aylmer Elementary

Ciaran Dooley, Amanda Matthews, April Moffatt,
Carissa Piercey, Véronique Savard, Nicole Smith,
Ashley Tluaert, Christina Villeneuve-Séguin

Macdonald High School

Kim Headland, Angie O'Connor, Lara Zwetkoff

Maple Grove Elementary

Gabriela Coutard, Cathenna Michaud

Merton Elementary

Jessica Aflalo, Cari Friedman

North Hatley Elementary

Alarey Alsip

South Hull Elementary

Nathalie Morgan, Vythege Srithayakumar

St. Charles Elementary

Talia D'Costa

St. Patrick Elementary

Tyler Dixon, Gina Giambalvo, Mary Kate Jackson,
Angela Mastro-Baril, Melanie Moore, Tracy Witzke

Terry Fox Elementary

Vanessa Nikolaus

Wilder Penfield Elementary

Adriana Di Valerio



Some of this year's Golden Torch recipients celebrate with QFHSA Board President Rosemary Murphy (far left) at the Awards Luncheon



Our 2024 Award Winners



The 2024 Unsung Hero Award Recipients



Every year, the QFHSA invites local Home and School Associations to share the names of the unsung heroes in their midst. These are the dedicated volunteers who quietly and competently help out whenever and wherever they are needed. Their reliability and commitment make them extremely valuable volunteers within their Home and School community. These are the names of this year's 72 Unsung Hero Award recipients.

Cedarcrest Elementary

Gianna Melillo

Children's World Academy

Lisa Baylis, Erica Caruso, Lisa Cuscuna, Tamara Dell'Olio, Pina DiBlasi, Amanda DiCriscio, Vanessa Gervasi, Lina Marino, Audrey Nathaniel Jones, Melissa Pedicelli, Lisa Perffeto, Stephanie Rizzo, Mariana Vetro

Clearpoint Elementary

Christine Elie, Alejandra Juge

Dorval Elementary

Jinny Conte, Sheri Hankins

Edgewater Elementary

Maria Cheevers, Michael Langlois, Samantha Stillar

Forest Hill Elementary

Catherine Beaulieu, Marianne Brownie, Nicole De Cairos, Gennifer Desrosiers, Carla Devet, Allie Duquette, Clare Harrington, Paula MacNeil, Shauna May, Melanie Menscik, Josée-Ann Moisan, Stacey Ricciardi, Iva Senicnjak, John Wozniak

Gardenview Elementary

Jonathan Chan, Jui Wong

John Rennie High School

Wendy Robinson

Lord Aylmer Elementary

Véronique Savard

Macdonald High School

Emily Cooper, Sherry Dawson, Angela Mancuso, Trina Thompson, Nancy Watmore

Maple Grove Elementary

Bruno Saint-Onge

Merton Elementary

Evi Altman, Lynne Brash, Dawn Eisman, Melissa Felsky, Jackie Herman, Lisa Kunitzky, Ikrame Nagi, Oren Pollak, Debbi Safir, Marie Savage, Mindy Zunenshine

North Hatley Elementary

Joanne Boutin

South Hull Elementary

Kathleen Emberson, Kathleen McNulty, Norma Splane

St. Anthony Elementary

Kimberly Allik

St. Charles Elementary

Nushmia Abdullah

St. Patrick Elementary

Vilija Cote, Rebecka Lang, Cynthia McDonald, Shauneen McNair, Sonal Motihar, Julie Roberge, Patrick Trudeau

Terry Fox Elementary (Laval)

Vanessa Nikolaus

Wilder Penfield Elementary

France de la Rochelle, Adriana Di Valerio



Some of this year's Unsung Heroes celebrate with QFHSA Board President Rosemary Murphy (far left) at the Awards Luncheon



Igniting a Spark for Learning

Educational Adventures in Western Quebec



THIS YEAR, THE WESTERN QUEBEC CAREER CENTRE (WQCC) and Eardley Elementary School worked together to give Grade 5 and 6 Eardley students a unique opportunity to discover the world of trades.



For Damian Curley, the director of WQCC, and Julia Horner, the principal of Eardley Elementary, there were a lot of good reasons to create this program. It allows students to experience alternative and diverse forms of learning. It provides them with positive educational experiences that can ignite a spark that transfers into other areas of learning. It brings together theory and practice, showing students the practical applications of their classroom learning. Finally, it is an opportunity to promote the trades as a great option for students to strive for as opposed to something to fall back on.

How was the program developed? Mr. Curley and his team at WQCC already had programs for high-school students. With a little planning and some adaptations, they managed to create an experience dubbed Auto/Drafting/Welding 101 for elementary-aged students. The trades explored, auto mechanics, drafting, and welding, have high academic standards, especially in mathemat-

ics and science. Principal Horner explains, "The reality is, you need to be successful within academics to be successful in these trades."

This year, 80 Eardley students eagerly participated in this unique experience. Students were selected based on the skills required for each specialty and student interest.



In four 2-hour sessions, students learn about safety, how to complete work orders, and how to use machinery and tools. And, best of all, they get to try out the equipment themselves, under careful supervision, of course. This year's activities included changing a car tire and welding a candle holder.



What's next for the program? Mr. Curley believes that it may be time to add an additional subject: health care. As with skilled tradespeople, health care workers are in demand and that demand will only increase in the future.



The WQCC/Eardley collaboration is a wonderful success story, and the program is a highlight for students and staff in both schools. In addition to having a great deal of fun, Eardley's 101 course graduates gain knowledge, confidence, and an excellent introduction to the trades. Parents and guardians are noticing their children's enthusiasm for the program, too. It is a proud moment for all involved.

Julia Horner, Principal, Eardley Elementary School, and Damian Curley, Director, Western Quebec Career Centre



News for You

United on this Land: A Calendar Celebrating Cultures, Traditions, and History

“In Canada, our diversity is our strength. Our social, political, economic and cultural progress is not made in spite of our differences, but thanks to our differences.”

— The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Member of Parliament

The Month of June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Indigenous History Month• Pride Month (and the launch of Pride Season)
June 9-July 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Montreal Carimas Festival organized by the Caribbean Coalition Network of Montreal
June 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Indigenous Peoples Day
June 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian Multiculturalism Day
June 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Pride Day
July 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada Day
July 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ras el-Am el-Hijri</i>, the Islamic New Year, the first day of the Month of Muharram (Year 1446)
July 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nunavut Day, celebrating the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and the unique contributions of the Inuit
July 13-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Obon</i>, the Japanese festival honouring the spirits of the ancestors
July 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nelson Mandela International Day
July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Asalha Puja</i>, a Theravada Buddhist festival honouring the first teachings of the Buddha after his enlightenment• <i>Guru Purnima</i>, a Nepalese and Indian festival dedicated to academic and spiritual teachers
July 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day of Commemoration of the Great Upheaval, the deportation of French settlers living in what are now the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island
August 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emancipation Day, which recognizes the date in 1834 the Slavery Abolition Act came into effect across the British Empire
August 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
August 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Youth Day
August 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• World Humanitarian Day
August 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition
September 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ganesh Chaturthi</i>, a 10-day Hindu festival marking the birth of the elephant-headed deity, Ganesha, the god of prosperity and wisdom
September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
October 2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Rosh Hashanah</i>, the Jewish New Year



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An Offer to the Premier of Québec: Complimentary Summer Lessons on the History of Québec and Canada

A Commentary By Brian Rock

"Museums serve as vital institutions for preserving cultural heritage and offer a window into the evolution of society through history. Museums provide tangible links to humanity's collective past, showcasing artifacts and narratives that span centuries."

Muriel E. Graves

AS A RETIRED SECONDARY-SCHOOL TEACHER who taught the history of Québec and Canada in the '80s and '90s, it would be my pleasure to offer summer classes in July and August for Premier François Legault. A convenient time as the National Assembly of Québec is on its long summer break.

As the chair of the Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of the History of Québec (ComeCH-QC), I followed with interest the premier's official announcement on April 25, 2024: *"Son gouvernement veut ouvrir d'ici deux ans le premier Musée national de l'histoire du Québec ... qui sera implanté au pavillon central du Séminaire de Québec."* The premier added: *"Mon objectif, celui que je me donne, c'est que les Québécois sortent d'ici en se disant 'Que je suis fier d'être québécois!'"* The government believes this new museum will fill a void by presenting *"l'histoire des Québécois."* The premier finished his announcement with the following statement: *"Je pense qu'il est important de commencer avec Champlain, au tout début, de montrer comment ce n'était pas facile de survivre en Amérique, une petite minorité qui parle français."*

It is interesting to note that no representatives of the other political parties in the Québec National Assembly were invited to this announcement of a new museum dedicated to the history of Québec.

When questioned on the lack of representatives of the First Nations, who are usually invited to similar events, the premier announced that the museum will underline... *"la présence des nations autochtones qui étaient là avant nous autres et qui nous ont aidés à travers les années."*



Photo from Adobe Stock

Clearly, Monsieur Legault, the history of Québec began many centuries before the arrival of Champlain. This museum project will require a significant amount of in-depth research. Here are some suggestions to guide you:

- #1 Consult the Assembly of First Nations of Québec-Labrador (AFNQL) and be sure to get in touch with the historians the AFNQL suggests.
- #2 Consult the History faculties of McGill, Concordia, and Bishop's universities for information on the history of Anglophones and Allophones in Québec.
- #3 Contact Guy Rex Rodgers of the English Language Arts Network (ELAN) and arrange for a viewing of the "What We Choose to Remember" documentary film on the waves of immigration to Québec.
- #4 Contact Dr. Dorothy W. Williams of blacbiblio.com for more information on the history of Blacks in Montreal.
- #5 Knowing your government lacks strength in consulting Anglophone educational organizations, reach out to the following groups:
 - The Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN)
 - The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN)
 - The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN)
 - The Regional Development Network (RDN)
 - The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA)

Continued on the next page

News for You

A Commentary by Brian Rock

Continued from the previous page

- The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA)
- The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA)
- The Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT)
- The Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec
- The Quebec Provincial Association of Retired School Educators

It will take a considerable amount of time, research, and collaboration to create a museum that shares the history of *all* who live or have lived within the territory now known as the Province of Québec. There are many compelling and important stories to tell.

Bon courage!

Brian Rock, B.A., M.Ed., is a retired school principal and a former secondary teacher of English Language Arts and the History of Québec and Canada who now resides in Aylmer, Gatineau.

*Brian chairs the **COalition For the Future of English Education in Québec (COFFEE-QC)** as well as the **Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of the History of Québec (ComeECH-QC)**.*

*Brian is a director of the **CEGEP Heritage College Foundation (HCF)** and chairs its Governance and By-Laws Committee. Brian is also a director of the **Aylmer Heritage Association (AHA)** and chairs its Publications Committee.*

*A past president of the **Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. (QFHSA)**, Brian is currently a member of the QFHSA Board of Directors.*

*Note: The opinions expressed in this commentary are those of the author and not necessarily those of the **QFHSA**.*

News from the QFHSA's Education Subcommittee

In recent months, the Education Subcommittee has been discussing the rich diversity of Quebec's population. The committee strongly believes that this diversity should be acknowledged and celebrated. On page 16 of this issue, you will find a calendar of special days and events of importance to different groups within our community. The committee plans to make the calendar a regular feature of the *QFHSA News*.

The committee is also discussing how our Federation might incorporate Black history into everyday life instead of limiting the discussion of the historic and present-day realities of Black Quebecers to the month of February. The goal is to move the conversation forward and broaden our understanding of Quebec's Black community. Stay tuned for regular contributions on the topic from the QFHSA's education team in future issues of the *QFHSA News* and other QFHSA communications.

If this initiative to showcase the diversity of our province interests you or if you are interested in Quebec education in general, please consider joining the QFHSA's Education Subcommittee. New voices are always welcome! Please get in touch with the QFHSA office by

emailing info@qfhsa.org.

Cindy Lockhart,
On behalf of the Education Subcommittee

Did you know...?



The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) is an association composed of eight Quebec First Nations: Abenakis, Anishinabeg, Atikamekw, Wendat, Innu, Wolastoqiyik, Mi'gmaq, and Kanien'keha:ka.

The council represents 22 member communities. In addition to their native languages, a little more than half of the communities (12) speak French; the rest, English. The council represents 25 elementary and secondary schools as well as the Kiuna Institution, the only First Nations post-secondary institution in our province. All totalled, the council represents close to 6000 students.

You can find out more about the FNEC by visiting the council's website: cepn-fnec.ca



A Message From Membership Services: *Closing Up One Year and Starting Another*

Tying up Loose Ends:

- Please make sure that the final Home and School membership list has been sent to Marlyn. This document is archived and serves as part of your association's history.
- President's and Treasurer's Reports are due before July 15th. *Note: Home and School President(s) must sign the Treasurer's Report or be copied on the email sent to the QFHSA office. Now that we are no longer in the midst of the COVID pandemic, this rule has been reinstated.*
- Constitution and By-Laws: If these documents have been updated, please email Marlyn a copy. Make sure the amendment date is listed on the cover page.

The 2024-2025 School Year:

- Forms on the website will be updated by June 30th. There have been issues with downloading the forms so please see the instructions given at the top of the "Forms" page. The office will be working on this

over the summer.

- Please send in the 2024-2025 Executive List as soon as possible. Until the 2023-2024 President's and Treasurer's Reports have been submitted, current and new executive members will be included on the contact list.
- August 2024: In August, sit down with the school principal to discuss Home and School's plan for the year, school priorities, meeting dates, etc.
- Executive Training Workshops: Stay tuned for news on workshops to be held via Zoom at the end of September/early October.

Summer Office Hours:

The QFHSA office will be on hiatus until mid-August. Office staff will be checking in from home so please contact us by email.

KUDOS.....

To those moving on from an elementary school Home and School, thank you for the countless hours you have donated to your local association and don't forget to

join your high school's Home and School Association. To the new executive members, I look forward to working with you next school year.

Wishing you lots of summer R & R!

Cheers,
Marlyn, QFHSA Membership
Services Coordinator
marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org

Literacy News: *Reading Corner*

Summer is always a good time to sit down with a great book. Here are just a few links to some of the book lists available online:

- The Book Centre's spring book awards round up: <https://book-centre.ca/news/spring-2024-book-awards-round-up>
- CBC's list of 28 young adult books to check out (Spring 2021): <https://www.cbc.ca/books/28-canadian-ya-books-to-check-out-in-spring-2021-1.5987232>
- Diverse Book Finder's list of stories set in Canada: <https://diversebookfinder.org/setting/canada/>

Remembering Barbara Moore 1927-2023

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations was saddened to learn recently of the passing of Barbara Moore. In her long and incredibly productive life, Barbara managed to find the time to volunteer extensively. So many organizations have benefited from her caring and generous community spirit, including Meals on Wheels, the Montreal Council of Women, the Westmount YMCA, the City of Westmount, and the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations. *Barbara was a member of the QFHSA board of directors and held the position of vice-president in 1977-1978.*

An exemplary citizen, an extremely dedicated volunteer, Barbara received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 and was named the Westmount Municipal Association's 2008 Volunteer Citizen of the Year. These are just two examples of the many accolades she received through the years. Many have benefited from Barbara Moore's dedicated service to her community and the well-being of its citizens.

The QFHSA offers its sincere condolences to all who had the good fortune to know Barbara Moore.



The Kids' Page

This page is for students in the Federation's Home and School network. This time around, the topic is summer! What would you like to do on your summer vacation? Make your own To Do List, and let the fun begin!

My Summer Fun TO DO LIST

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Focus on the Locals

In the **Focus on the Locals** section, we share news and information from our local associations. **Thank you to all of the Home and Schools that contributed to this issue.** We would love to hear from our other Home and Schools too! Before sending photos, please make sure you have the permission of those appearing in the photos. We invite Home and School Associations to send their news to news@qfhsa.org.

From the First Day of School to the Last, Crestview Elementary Rocks!

Our Activities

We sprinkled some fun into the mix this year! From Halloween pumpkins to Christmas gifts, Valentine's Day and Easter treats, we went all out to spoil the students this year. And let's not forget about our amazing staff! We made sure to shower them with gratitude for looking after our little rascals and treating them like royalty!



A Great Year for Fundraising

Thanks to the incredible support of our school community, Crestview Home and School was able to raise over \$22,000 this year through such activities as Pizza Days, chocolate sales, first aid kit sales, movie and comedy nights, pictures with Santa, and more.

Helping Our Kids

Crestview Home and School was able to go on a shopping spree for our kids, stocking up on goodies requested by teachers and therapists to tackle behavioural and sensory hurdles. Blackout tents, a ball pit, toys, and tech gizmos to the rescue!



We are also happy to report that air-conditioned classrooms are on the horizon for next year!

We're Proud of our Teachers

On Wednesday, May 8th, Crestview Elementary teachers Brittany Cerveira, Kathryn Katsaros, and Kelly Sauvé received an honourable mention at the 2024 Pedagogical Innovation Awards held at Concordia University. The contest spotlights technological applications in teaching. Our teachers were one of five finalists selected from 40 entries from across the province.



In their Augmentative and Alternative Communication Pilot Project, Crestview teachers use the Proloquo App to help support our non-speaking students. Congratulations to our teachers as well as Speech Pathologist Gail Jaffe and Consultant Caroline Erdos, whose contributions were instrumental in the success of this project. Crestview Home and School is very proud to provide financial support for the project.

We're a Little Team that Gets Big Things Done

We are a small, but powerful team. Our goal is to positively impact our children's school experience. We encourage parents to join the fun in whatever way they can. Together, we make magic happen!



*Submitted by Nathalie Sekpanya, Crestview Elementary
Home and School Association*

Focus on the Locals



And the Fun Goes On at Terry Fox Elementary in Laval

As we approach the end of a fantastic school year, we can look back and see that the Terry Fox Laval Home and School Association has brought so much school spirit and excitement to Terry Fox Elementary Laval. As our first year as a Home and School, we are so very proud of all we have accomplished. The tireless efforts made by our dedicated volunteers have set the bar high!

Spring Is Here!

We are delighted to share the students' collaborative effort with the Terry Fox Home and School Association in the creation of the beautiful Terry Fox Spring Garden! All students, from Pre-K to Grade 6, had the opportunity to contribute to the garden by creating beautiful garden-themed



crafts. The indoor garden was displayed in the school's front entrance and helped transform it into a vibrant and welcoming space—to help chase away those winter blues! This project has been a true tribute to our school community's creativity and teamwork and was definitely a showstopper!

The Garden Initiative

The Garden Initiative

Once the snow had melted, the Terry Fox Laval Home



and School Association wanted to improve our outdoor space. Together, as a team, we rolled up our sleeves and dedicated two weekends to transforming our school's front yard.



With the generous support of donations and our principal, we were able to introduce a variety of vibrant plants and flowers that now adorn our front yard. These additions not only enhance the aesthetic appeal, but also promote biodiversity on our school grounds. This is simply the beginning. Our team has many other ideas to help beautify this space in the years to come!

"Terry's Blast from the Past" Time Capsule Project

To celebrate our Kindergarten students' journey, we have introduced a new initiative at Terry Fox Elementary, a special time capsule: "Terry's Blast from the Past"! This capsule captures memories and cherished moments from this school year. The capsule has been sealed, and will be on display, only to be re-opened for the students' Grade 6 graduation in 2030! This is the beginning of a new tradition at Terry Fox Elementary. Let's create lasting memories together!



2nd Annual Block Party Recap

We had our carnival-themed Annual Block Party and it was a tremendous success, thanks to the incredible support of our community! We welcomed over 800 community members and friends for an evening filled with games, local vendors, delicious food, face painting, and so many prizes!



Laughter and excited voices filled the air as students lined up to take their aim at their very own principal in the dunk tank. There were endless smiles as children tried frantically to catch whirling tickets in the cash cube game, to win an adorable plushie at the can toss game, or to make silly faces at our photo booth (complete with props). It was a joy to see everyone come together and celebrate as one school community. We look forward to making next year's event even bigger and better!



Submitted by the team at Terry Fox Elementary (Laval) Home and School Association

Oh, What a Great Year It's Been at St. Charles!

As we wrap up yet another school year, we reflect on all the accomplishments and memories that were made. This year saw the return of many of our school community's favourite activities, such as the Welcome Back BBQ, Photo Day, Breakfast with Santa, Carnival, Staff Appreciation Week, and the unofficial "Best Day of the Year," our year-ending Footloose celebration. With careful planning and thoughtful execution, we introduced some new events and initiatives as well, including the St. Charles Home and School Winter Market, Family Night, and Family Photo Day.

It's Carnival Time!

Although the weather outside was frigid, inside St. Charles School, the inviting aroma of hot chocolate filled the hallways. Students were treated to hot chocolate and cookies and enjoyed many rounds of Bingo and a few bad jokes over the intercom. Bingo winners brought home Indigo gift cards.



Literacy Week Was a Hit!

Home and School volunteers were happy to be part of Literacy Week by helping out at the wonderful Book Tasting Café where students were treated to a snack and a juice, all while exploring the various books on the menu. Home and School donated Indigo gift cards and books to each class.



Spring Family Night Fun

The St Charles community got together to hang out '90s style during our Spring Family Night. We danced the night away to a wonderful '90s themed playlist and enjoyed a few rounds of Bingo. Plus there were some super fun prizes, too!



Family Photo Shoot



It was a beautiful day for an outdoor family photo shoot on May 25th. We met in the park behind the school for the photos and the results were fantastic!

Celebrating our Grade 6 Grads



The school was filled with emotion as we celebrated the Grade 6 graduating class on June 14th. Fun tunes, a photo booth, a catered meal, and an ice cream truck made for a perfect graduation celebration.

Beating the Heat at Footloose

On June 18th, the sun shone down on us for Footloose Day, our annual end-of-year celebration. The park and school yard were full of happy children, smiling volunteers, and helpful staff. Students played on inflatables, participated in games, and cooled off with freezies and frozen yogourt. A few brave staff members and volunteers cooled off at the splash game where children threw balls at a target to launch buckets of water on willing heads.



All of these events were made possible thanks to our amazing volunteers, dedicated school staff, and everyone's support of our fundraising initiatives. The money raised this year also made it possible for Home and School to provide educational materials for our classrooms and support the planned school yard upgrades.

Best wishes for a summer full of adventure for all!

Submitted by Talia D'Costa and Nadia Sears, St. Charles Elementary Home and School Association

SHARE YOUR NEWS!



Photo from Adobe Stock

What is happening in your Home and School community? Fun fundraisers? Special events? Please let us know and we will be happy to share your news in our *Focus on the Locals* section in an upcoming issue of the *QFHSA News*. Send your submissions to news@qfhsa.org

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