

VOLUME 61 ISSUE 4

WINTER 2023

# QFHSA NEWS

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL MEMBERS

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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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QFHSA NEWS

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**All QFHSA Fall Conference photos by Howard Kay**

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

*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](mailto:news@qfhsa.org).



## The 2023 Fall Conference: A Joyful and Informative Event on a Sunny Saturday Morning

IT IS WONDERFUL TO REPORT that after four long years, the QFHSA was able to bring back its in-person Fall Conference. The event, which was held on the morning of Saturday, November 4th, was very well received by all in attendance.

Members from 12 local Home and School Associations were joined by QFHSA board members and staff and guests from the community. Although most of the Home and School members who attended were from the Greater Montreal Area, we were very happy to see representatives from the Gatineau area, too!

Our hosts, Merton School and its Home and School Association, were absolutely wonderful. Merton volunteers were in abundance from the Friday afternoon set up all the way to the Saturday afternoon clean up. Rosana Caplan, the principal of Merton, was on hand to warmly welcome everyone to the conference. Thank you to Home and School President Samantha Patel, Merton volunteers, and Principal Caplan for being such gracious hosts.



This in-person event gave conference goers the opportunity to meet the volunteers and staff who work at the federation and learn more about the QFHSA's activities.

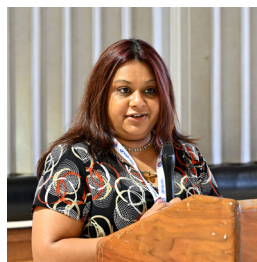
QFHSA Board President Rosemary Murphy, our emcee for the event,

invited two of her board colleagues, Natasha Drysdale and Samantha Patel, to describe their work on the QFHSA's committees.

Natasha, who is the chair of the Rights Subcommittee as well as the vice-chair of the Resolutions Subcommittee, described the activities of the Rights Subcommittee as follows: "We look at things that are arising in our schools, in education, but especially the government's plans (new bills, laws, and policies) that are going to affect education soon or down the road."



Samantha, who is chair of the Education Subcommittee, explained that her team looks at issues in education that have a direct impact on students, educators, and school administrations. Some of the topics the committee has discussed include support for special needs students, the teacher shortage, and sex education. The committee also oversees a number of QFHSA programs, including "Born to Read" and "Reluctant Readers."



Both Natasha and Samantha invited everyone to consider joining a QFHSA committee. After all, new voices and perspectives create stronger committees.

To the delight of all, Dr. Michael Canuel, the CEO of LEARN, kicked off the day's activities with an informative and hugely entertaining special presentation. Dr. Canuel's talk was actually a double-header: he combined a useful overview of all that LEARN has to offer with a fascinating demonstration of generative artificial intelligence.

After a break for refreshments and a tour of the vendor/information booths, conference goers attended one of the two excellent workshops on offer. Zmira King, Ph.D., explored youth mental health and well-being in her "Is My Child Okay?" workshop. Meanwhile, Diane Phillips, B.Ed., and Caroline Chang, M.Ed., inspired parents with an abundance of strategies to make homework a positive experience for all. Please see the articles on pages 6 to 10 of this newsletter to learn more about this year's fall conference.

Before returning to their busy weekend lives, Home and School members enjoyed a nice lunch. Conversations were lively, and parents took advantage of this time to meet and connect with other Home and School parents and the QFHSA team.

The QFHSA would like to thank everyone who participated in this year's event. The Fall Conference committee was very pleased with the positive feedback it received from attendees. The team is already looking forward to the 2024 edition of the conference and to welcoming even more parents!

Karen Henchey,  
*Communications Officer*



# A Busy Fall for In-Person Gatherings... and Political Developments

## *A Message from the QFHSA's President*

IT DEFINITELY WAS A BUSY FALL, with more and more meetings, conferences, and events happening in person—and plenty of developments in Quebec education.

QFHSA staff and volunteers manned a booth at the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT) Convention. We met young teachers and student teachers who were very interested in joining our local associations. It's always great to have them as members.

Our federation held its first in-person Fall Conference since COVID on November 4th. Participants and vendors alike were entertained and informed by guest speaker Michael Canuel, the CEO of LEARN. The workshops on children's mental health and homework strategies were excellent.

We look forward to gathering in person again in May at the QFHSA's Awards Banquet. I hope you can join us for the event. It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Home and School volunteers. We will still hold the Annual General Meeting on Zoom, however. It has proven to be an efficient and convenient format for all.

The government is in the process of adopting bills and procedures that may present problems for the English-speaking community.

Bill 15, the health and social services system reform bill, was adopted December 9th when closure was invoked. Many healthcare workers and professionals voiced con-

cerns with this law, which could eliminate the right to be served in a language other than French.

Bill 23 was also adopted before the National Assembly's holiday break. It gives the Minister of Education the power to appoint the Directors-General of the French school service centres, to overturn any of their decisions, or to even fire them. Thankfully, there was an amendment to exempt our English school boards from these clauses.



McGill, Concordia, and Bishop's are reeling from the Quebec government's sudden imposition of new rules on tuition fees and French language competency requirements for many out-of-province students.

The QFHSA has been recognized and thanked for its support of Senator Kutcher's bill to eliminate child physical punishment from the Canadian Criminal Code. We have also advocated, through the Canadian Home and School Federation, for student well-being, stronger school communities, and the establishment of a fully-funded national school food program.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or the office if you have any questions.

Please take care and stay safe.

*Rosemary Murphy*

### *Dates to Remember*

Saturday, January 27	Family Literacy Day
February 11 to 17	Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week
<b>SAVE THE DATE!</b> Saturday, May 25	QFHSA Awards Banquet
<b>SAVE THE DATE!</b> Wednesday, May 29	QFHSA Annual General Meeting

Image from Adobe Stock

# Remembering the Mission

## *A Message from the Executive Director*

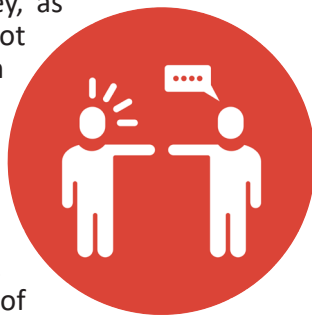


### THE TRUTH MATTERS.

In a world where social media makes it possible to say whatever one wants to say, and, with a click of a button, spread it around the Internet far and wide, it is so very important that we strive, at all times, to only speak the truth.

It is so easy in a moment of anger or stress to lash out and write things you later regret. The 24-hour rule is a good one: Wait 24 hours before you hit the send button. And listen to that still small voice in your brain that whispers “Don’t do this.”

Whenever you have a group of people working together and managing public money, as Home and Schools do, it is not impossible to find yourselves in uncomfortable situations, and when tempers rise, find yourselves in the middle of arguments. Things then get said outside of meetings, on social media, behind closed doors, and everything is blown out of proportion.



No one wins, and with everyone struggling to defend themselves, the truth often falls by the wayside. Home and Schools can be torn apart. When these internal Home and School struggles happen, our kids suffer. Those fun activities that they look forward to are delayed, diminished, or cancelled outright.

That is why it is so important to keep the Home and School mission statement first and foremost in your minds:

*Home and School is an independent, not for profit volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education and general well-being of children and youth.*

*Home and School promotes the involvement of parents, students, educators, and the community at large in the advancement of learning and acts as a voice for parents.*

It is not about egos or power or even fundraising. It is about bringing parents together on shared projects, forging friendships, and making school fun for the kids.

However, there still needs to be accountability with public money and there will always be a need to push for that accountability. It is too easy to keep the peace by looking the other way or sweeping things under the carpet, but difficult questions will need to be asked with a demand for the truth. Hopefully, when the dust settles, your association emerges stronger than ever.

In a world where the truth seems an antiquated idea, we need to be able to stand on solid ground.

On that heady note, I hope the holiday season gave you an opportunity to relax, enjoy friends, family and food, and to take care of one another.

*Carol Meindl*



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# A Look Back at the 2023 Fall Conference

## Rethinking the “Danger” of Generative AI

With Michael Canuel

ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS of this year’s Fall Conference was the informative and hugely entertaining presentation by Dr. Michael Canuel, the CEO of LEARN. In a little over 30 minutes, he managed to demystify Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and demonstrate its amazing potential. The audience was completely captivated by Dr. Canuel’s talk, which combined humour, sharp observations, and fascinating demonstrations.

### Generative AI: It’s Short History and Massive Impact

What is artificial intelligence (AI)? Encyclopedia Britannica defines it as...

*“... the ability of a computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks that are commonly associated with the intellectual processes characteristic of humans, such as the ability to reason.”*

Canuel explains that AI is the technology behind robot vacuums, for example, and describes Generative Artificial Intelligence as a subset of AI. Open AI (ChatGPT) came out about a year ago. Within 3 to 4 months, it had amassed about 1.3 billion users, almost all through word of mouth.

How did ChatGPT become so popular so quickly? According to Canuel, it answers a particular need. He explains: “Google takes information and gives it back to you. But Generative AI takes information from here, there, somewhere else, and combines it and gives you a new slant on it. That is a very important difference. It is

generating new data for you.” While he notes that Generative AI is not perfect and sometimes makes mistakes, which the program charmingly calls “hallucinations,” it is getting better all the time. As Generative AI grows, it improves, and according to Canuel, that growth is exponential.

ChatGPT and other Generative AI are known as LLMs, which is short for Large Language Models.



Canuel has been fascinated by the Generative AI phenomenon for over half a year. A former teacher and the co-founder of the Canadian e-Learning Network, Canuel is an enthusiastic lifelong learner, keen to embrace innovations that have the potential to change the way we live, work, and learn.

And make no mistake about it, Canuel believes that the massive impact of Generative AI will only increase over time. To make his point, Canuel shared information from his extensive reading. Forbes magazine, for

example, expects that about 50% of jobs will change significantly; while Goldman Sachs predicts that 300 million jobs around the world will be disrupted by AI. Canuel sums up the situation as follows: “Industries recognize that something big, really, really big is happening. It is important.”

Canuel fears that in contrast to industry, the education system will be too slow to embrace Generative AI. He reminds us that historically, education changes more slowly than the coal industry. He recalls a time not all that long ago when there was push back about having computers in classrooms.

He fears that those at the helm of our education system will get mired in endless discussions about Generative AI—creating policies, instituting task forces, writing reports, etc., when they need to be far more nimble in their response to this juggernaut.

Canuel also sees too many teachers still employing the didactic education model: They lecture students with the aim of filling their heads with the knowledge they need to pass that final exam. Canuel says, “We need to do more than just data transfer and Generative AI when used properly can help bring us in that particular direction.”

### Generative AI in Action

Canuel believes Generative AI can be an extremely powerful learning

*Continued on the next page*

# A Look Back at the 2023 Fall Conference

tool, and he gave several examples to prove his point.

In the first example, Canuel asked ChatGPT to provide a 300-word essay on the 1837 Rebellion in the style of a Grade 10 social sciences student. Within a very short time, ChatGPT produced the essay in the requested writing style and included references.

As Canuel pointed out, the essay as written was not perfect. It was a simple data transfer with non-functional references meant to serve as place holders. It is important that the ChatGPT user sees the essay for what it is: a starting point. The student needs to go one step further and analyze the data and make the essay his own by asking questions about the data provided and delving deeper into the topic. Canuel explains that this crucial second step helps the student assimilate the data, and the end product is a document that is authentic and relevant. Canuel says: "When things are authentic for you, when they are relevant for you... you remember them. They become a part of your thinking." When used well, ChatGPT motivates the student to use his critical thinking skills.

Canuel also shared a few other AI applications that serve to both spark learning *and make it fun*.

- **Character.ai** users get to talk and interact with historical and contemporary figures.
- **Visla** users can make a video within minutes.
- **Call Annie** app users can ask Annie or another simulated person questions. As Canuel demonstrated, the answers are surprisingly complete. Canuel explains that Call Annie helps to personal-

ize learning experiences and can be a launching pad for further learning.

All of these examples brought home Canuel's important message: **Generative AI is an incredible learning tool.** It would be an absolute shame to miss this huge opportunity to enhance our children's learning experiences.



## What Can Parents Do to Support Generative AI?

To Canuel, parents are rock stars for the way they are engaged in their children's lives. He firmly believes that what goes on in our schools is important and parents need to be involved. We all want our children to thrive at school and making learning interesting and fun helps to make that happen. He encourages parents to have a conversation with their school administrations to find out how Generative AI is being used in their schools.

Fascinating, thought-provoking, and packed with humour, Dr. Canuel's presentation was a real treat.

Karen Henchey,  
*Communications Officer*



Rosemary Murphy, Dr. Canuel, and Carol Meindl

## How to Introduce Generative AI to Your Children: *Dr. Canuel's Advice*

*The following is an excerpt from the information sheet Dr. Canuel distributed at the QFHSA's Fall Conference.*

**Familiarize Yourself:** Before introducing Generative AI to your children, take the time to understand how it works and its potential benefits and risks.

**Open Dialogue:** Initiate a conversation with your children about Generative AI. Discuss its capabilities, potential uses, and limitations.

**Teach Responsible Use:** Emphasize the importance of using AI responsibly. Explain that it can be a helpful tool, but it should not replace critical thinking and creativity.

**Monitor Usage:** Keep an eye on how your children are using AI tools. Ensure they're not relying on AI for everything and that they're still engaging in active learning and problem-solving.

**Set Boundaries:** Establish boundaries for AI usage, such as when it's appropriate to seek AI assistance and when it's important to rely on their own efforts.

**Privacy Awareness:** Teach your children about the importance of online privacy and data security. They should understand the implications of sharing personal information with AI tools.

**Encourage Creativity:** Balance AI usage with creative and hands-on activities.

# A Look Back at the 2023 Fall Conference



## Finding those Winning Homework Strategies With Diane Phillips and Caroline Chang



THE WORKSHOP “WINNING HOMEWORK STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS” was just one of the many exciting events brought to this year’s QFHSA Fall Conference. The workshop was delivered by two extraordinary teachers who really prove that the teaching profession is not just a job but a calling! As we all packed in to a classroom, we were captivated immediately by Diane Phillips, STEM/STEAM Aerospace Educator, and Caroline Chang, Director of Top Tutorat.



Together they took us on a journey through the 10 benefits of homework. Most of us parents in the room had both elementary and high school students at home and in some way or another struggled with motivating and persuading our children to do their homework. Phillips' and Chang's energy and enthusiasm were infectious. Their dynamic delivery was not only engaging and informative, but interactive as well. Bursting with insights and innova-

tion, they offered many different strategies to demystify homework and reinforced the simple self-help strategies to help students stay on track and achieve their academic goals. The duo offered participants an opportunity to role play and had many fun simple games to play, demonstrating how homework can be fun. We were all encouraged to try this at home and were even able to keep some of the games!



As they concluded the workshop, they offered up many different resources and reinforced how homework teaches students the long-term benefits of setting priorities, time management, and taking responsibility for their part in the education process. What an insightful way to spend a morning!!

Debbie Stock  
Co-Chair, Roslyn Elementary Home and School Association



## Helpful Strategies from Caroline Chang and Diane Phillips

### Make Space and Time for Homework

- Try to be consistent about when homework time happens. Establish a weekly routine/Use a family calendar.
- Make daily homework goals/task lists.
- Encourage your child to get organized. With big projects, get them to write down what they'll do each day to meet the deadline.
- Investigate the kind of learner you have and adapt accordingly.

### Environment

- Create the right space and atmosphere for homework. Find out where your child focuses best. Reduce distractions.
- Help set your child's mind frame. Encourage them to believe in their abilities to complete a hard task.

### Executive Functioning

- Get your kids to predict how much time a task will

take. Encourage them to try to meet that time goal.

- Let them create an action plan.
- Set break times.
- Celebrate successes! Suggestion: Create "J'apprends" and "Je sais" boxes. Move tasks from one box to the other as they're accomplished. Make learning fun with pre-homework learning activities—Bingo, counting games, dice games, etc.

### Constructing Parents' Knowledge

- If needed, seek support from your school.
- Know your allies and use all available resources: Ask other parents, call a friend, check out Alloprof, LEARN, and other tutoring options.

### Constructing the Right Attitude

- Help your child find satisfaction in the process of doing something (intrinsic motivation). This leads to a higher level of success.



# A Look Back at the 2023 Fall Conference



## Supporting Your Child's Mental Health With Zmira King



A HUGE THANK YOU to Psychologist Zmira King, Ph.D., for coming to speak at the amazing Fall Conference. The session was well attended as we are all looking out for the best ways to help our children, no matter the age. Keeping watch over our children and our own mental well-being has become much more difficult since the days of our grandparents and will continue to change and evolve with each new generation.

Dr. King was great at presenting to our engaged group of parents the difference between mental health and mental illness. The diagrams and presentation that she showed were great for everyone. Math lovers like me appreciated her x and y axes for illustrating the quadrants of

mental possibilities. Hearing the criteria used for the different levels of mental issues really helped to outline what to watch for in our children.



The conversation included discussions about social media and the challenges parents and teachers face when dealing with the best way to support our students. It is clear that the challenges that we now face as parents did not exist for our parents.

The biggest part of our conversation was about when to start looking for help and how to remain positive while helping your own child or other children going through any situations.

It was interesting to learn that neuro-typical and neuro-diverse children are affected equally. By creating realistic boundaries and limits, we provide clear expectations and responsibilities. Watching and spending time with our youngsters is the best way to notice any changes and get the supports they require quickly.

Remember, no matter where you are in life, **you matter**.

Cathenna Michaud, *Membership Chair, Maple Grove Elementary Home and School Association*



## Zmira King Describes What Positive Mental Health Looks Like and How Parents Can Support It

### Things that Contribute to Positive Mental Health and Well-Being

#### Positive interpersonal relationships

- A healthy parental attachment; positive social connections with others; friendships

#### Feeling that you matter

- Feeling that your life has purpose & meaning; feeling that you matter in some way to your family, community

#### Good emotional regulation

- Recognizing and accepting all emotions & being able to label and describe them; recognizing bodily sensations that cause discomfort & learning to tolerate them; ability to self-calm

#### Traits: Flexibility, Self-Reliance and Problem-Solving Skills

- Having the ability to be flexible & to adapt in changing situations

- Having the ability to find solutions when encountering problems
- Having the confidence & autonomy to handle challenges

### What Parent Can Do to Support their Child's Mental Well-Being

- Show empathy and validation, listen actively, acknowledge
- Model: Kids learn by observing
- Allow kids to make mistakes & experience failure on occasion
- Allow a certain level of risk taking
- Avoid over-accommodating every need or jumping in to fix things
- Teach problem-solving, coping skills
- Provide guidance

Top photos from Adobe Stock

# A Look Back at the 2023 Fall Conference



## What Is LEARN?

Founded in 2005, the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN) is a non-profit organization with a mandate to serve the English education community of Quebec. At the Fall Conference, Dr. Canuel took a few minutes to describe some of the resources and services LEARN provides—all at no cost to the user.

### For Students: A Virtual Campus

- **Free Online Tutoring** for students in Grades 2 to 11. Students register for 30-minute tutorials on any particular subject or topic. *An independent study shows that tutoring improves a student's marks, attitude, motivation, and self-confidence.*
- **Online Classes** for students when the enrollment doesn't justify hiring a teacher. An essential service for remote school boards.
- **ClassMarker:** Online tests students can do to check their understanding of a subject. The tests help reveal learning gaps.
- **Scholastic BookFLIX:** Hundreds

of books available for students to enjoy on their own or by reading along with the storyteller.

### For Parents

- The **Parents Section** on the website provides links to educational resources, family resources, other groups/associations that support families, and LEARN's online tutoring program.

### For Communities

- A **Community Learning Centre (CLC) Network** in 25 schools across the province. With the CLC Network, LEARN helps strengthen the school/community bond

through projects (including "I Belong" and "Bedtime Stories") and events/activities that bring everyone together.

### For Teachers

- **Professional development seminars** and workshops on everything from robotics to early childhood literacy.
- **Resources** to assist with curriculum planning.

Find out about these services and more by visiting the LEARN website: [www.learnquebec.ca](http://www.learnquebec.ca). You can also access the LEARN site from your school board portal by clicking on the LEARN icon.

## Thank You

The QFHSA would like to thank the groups that participated in our 2023 Fall Conference. It was nice to meet you in person!



**Alloprof**

[www.alloprof.qc.ca/en/parents](http://www.alloprof.qc.ca/en/parents)

**Animation Kidz**

[www.animationkidz.ca](http://www.animationkidz.ca)

**Budding Artists Fundraisers**

[www.BuddingArtists.ca](http://www.BuddingArtists.ca)

**Canadian Parents for French CPF Quebec & Nunavut**

<https://qc-nu.cpf.ca>

**Épique inc.**

[www.epiqueinc.com](http://www.epiqueinc.com)

**Everblast Play Company**

[www.everblastplay.com](http://www.everblastplay.com)

**Félix & Norton Cookies**

[www.felixandnorton.com/pages/fundraising](http://www.felixandnorton.com/pages/fundraising)

**Janna Promotions**

[www.jannapromotions.com](http://www.jannapromotions.com)

**LEARN**

<https://learnquebec.ca/>

**Montreal Wado Ryu Karate Association**

[www.dojo-mwrka.com](http://www.dojo-mwrka.com)

**Online Empowerment**

[www.onlineempowerment.ca](http://www.onlineempowerment.ca)

**Quebec Association of Geography Teachers and Global Educators**

<https://geographyteacher-sofquebec.weebly.com/>

**Samajam**

<https://samajam.ca/>

**Super Recycleurs**

[www.SuperRecycleurs.com](http://www.SuperRecycleurs.com)

**Task Force on Linguistic Policy**

[www.TheTaskForce.ca](http://www.TheTaskForce.ca)

**Top Tutorat**

<https://toptutorat.com>

**World's Finest Chocolate**

[www.WorldsFinest.ca](http://www.WorldsFinest.ca)

## News from the Board

### Spotlight on the QFHSA Board of Directors: *Ahmed Hassan*



I was very happy and proud to be elected to the QFHSA's board on June 1st, 2023.

I started volunteering with Home and School when my first born entered Kindergarten. I still remember that first meeting and how welcoming everyone was.

Volunteering is one of the best decisions I made because it gave me the opportunity to work with and get to know many of the wonderful parents and educators who work tirelessly to serve the students and the community. I am lucky to have started volunteering because my professional background (technology and finance) would not have steered me in this direction.

A little bit about my history, though. I grew up in many countries and was blessed to witness

individuals with differences working together, resulting in stronger communities. I learned that sharing common goals helps people align and support each other through these differences. Now, let's fast forward to the present.

There have been many years, events, meetings, and discussions since that first Home and School meeting I attended. My eldest just entered high school, my second is half way through elementary, and my youngest will soon be entering Kindergarten. Through the years, I have volunteered with Home and School, governing boards, parent committees, and also at the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA). I have served as secretary, treasurer, vice chair, an EPCA director, and been part of many committees.

With all of my experiences, I now see the moving parts and how they all fit together. Students, parents, educators, cultures, beliefs, policies, and communities are all delicately intertwined actors that need to be understood through communication and empathy. I look forward to understanding and representing the interests of all involved. I hope my work at the QFHSA will help all see our common goal and align the moving parts to produce successful and healthy students.

To the success and well-being of all students.

*Ahmed Hassan*

## Home and School Resolutions



Photo from Adobe Stock

Are there issues that affect all Home and Schools that your members believe should be addressed at the provincial level? Your ideas and input are very much welcomed. Talk to your Home and School members and find out what is on their minds. These discussions may lead your Home and School to draft a resolution to bring to the QFHSA's 2024 Annual General Meeting.

In the "Forms" section of our website, you will find two documents about preparing resolutions: an information sheet with a sample resolution (<https://bit.ly/3tYr62t>) and a resolution template (<https://bit.ly/3vDL7M9>). The QFHSA will also be happy to provide tips on writing a resolution. Don't hesitate to get in touch.

The deadline for first drafts of resolutions is **early April**. Please send your draft resolutions to the QFHSA Resolutions Subcommittee by email to [info@qfhsa.org](mailto:info@qfhsa.org).

# News for You



## Bring Your Questions Night a Big Success! Notes from the November 28th Regional Council Meeting

JUST BEFORE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES kicked into high gear, Home and School executives and QFHSA board members and staff got together for a virtual “Bring Your Questions Night.” This Zoom event turned out to be a lot of fun and ran for close to 2 hours! The event happened on the day the December teacher strike days were announced. This naturally became the first topic of discussion. True to their nature, Home & School executives were quick to figure out how to work with this new development. Here are some other questions we tackled that night and the opinions/advice shared:

### How Is Your Home & School Celebrating the Holidays?

- Helping those in need with holiday baskets.
- Craft fairs with vendors, caroling, hot chocolate and sleigh rides.

### How Do You Manage Pride Wear (Branded Items/Attire)?

- Make sure you have items at different price points so everyone feels included.
- Use the items for prizes and gifts for staff appreciation. *Some Home & Schools give all newcomers a T-shirt as a gift.*
- Home & Schools are looking to offer pride wear 2 or 3 times a year instead of all year long.
- Storage can be a problem—It’s hard to keep a large amount of stock!
- Sell off older stock/sell used items on your website/social media.

- Pride wear doesn’t make a huge profit, but helps with school spirit.

### How Do You Handle Money?

*This was a popular topic. How you manage your funds depends on the type of bank account you have and your Home & School’s by-laws/constitution. Do you have a two-signature requirement for cheques? If so, you’ll need to abide by that. Important reminder: Track, track, track your cash flow. Make sure to review your revenues and expenses (and expected expenses) at each Home & School meeting.*

#### **Receiving Money**

##### By E-Transfer

- Available with a small business account; some Home & Schools do not pay fees to accept e-transfers.

##### Through a Home & School Website

- Home & Schools pay a transaction fee to their provider (Stripe, for example, charges \$2 per transaction) plus there are credit card fees.
- Do one fundraising campaign at a time. (Running simultaneous fundraisers makes things harder to track!)

##### Through the Stripe or Square App at Events

- Download the app on your phone for free; use it to accept credit card purchases at events.

##### Use Google Forms

- Parents fill out a form (to cover pizza lunches, for example) and

then pay by e-transfer or cheque. *Make sure you get all the information you need on the Google form so you can match the payment with the student.*

##### Fundraise via a Vendor Website

- Parents make their purchases directly on the vendor website.
- Home & School receives a lump sum payment for all transactions.
- It’s minimal work for the Home & School.

##### Accept Cash

- Not a popular choice these days, but one high school Home & School handles their bi-weekly pizza lunches that way.

#### **Spending Money**

##### By E-Transfer

- Only available with some bank accounts.
- A fee may apply (One Home & School pays \$1.50 per e-transfer).

##### By Cheque

- With cheque-based Home & Schools, Home & School volunteers have to pay for purchases themselves and then get reimbursed later. It’s not always convenient. Suggestion: Pre-approve some payments each month.

### How Should Home & Schools Prepare for Emergencies?

- It’s a good idea for some Home & School members to be first aid trained. *(School boards ensure that schools have trained first responders on staff, but these staff*

*Continued on the next page*

# News for You

## Bring Your Questions Night

*Continued from the previous page*

*members may not be at your event.) Suggestion: Run a first aid/CPR workshop for parents.*

- Make sure Home & School has its own first aid kit.
- “Stay Safe/Home Alone” and “Babysitting” are great courses to organize for students. *(Not as a fundraiser, but as a service.)*

## What’s Volunteering Like at the High School Level?

- It can be harder to get parents involved. It’s important to reassure them that it’s less of a commitment than at the elementary level.

## How Can I Start a New Home & School?

- Do some initial field work. Go to a PPO meeting and gauge the interest in starting a Home & School. See how a Home & School will fit in at the school.

## Where Can I Find Out What Other Home & Schools Are Doing to Raise Funds?

- Marlyn, the QFHSA’s Membership Services Coordinator, compiles a list of new/interesting fundraising ideas and events from the annual reports of local associations. The list was shared at the QFHSA’s fall Executive Training Workshops and in the Fall issue of the *QFHSA News*. Email [marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org](mailto:marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org) for more information.
- Ask your questions in the **QFHSA Think Tank**, a private Facebook group for local Home & School

executives. If you haven't joined the group yet, search for “QFHSA Think Tank” on Facebook and ask to join.

## What Are Your Thoughts/Advice on Fundraising?

- The most successful fundraisers always seem to be the ones that are a lot of work (chocolate bar sales, pizza lunches).
- Consider offering a labour-intensive fundraiser only every 2 years instead of yearly.
- A cost saver: Buy the ice cream for your “Ice Cream Friday” fundraisers. One Home & School calls ahead to a local grocery store to set aside 300 ice creams, which they buy on sale every few weeks. You’ll need to invest in large freezers.
- Be realistic. It’s not possible for a small group of volunteers to run a large event. Encourage parents who request activities and events to join Home & School and help.

## Are You Trying Something New/Do You Have an Activity to Recommend?

- A new pilot project: Morning fruit and oatmeal for students (to help the Home & School decide if it should create a breakfast club):
- Date night babysitting fundraiser: A Home & School offered 3 hours of babysitting for children (Cost: \$20-30 per child); parent volunteers babysat the children. Held at the school, the event was a blast for the 60 children who participated. They watched a movie, ate popcorn and hot dogs, and each received a book.



## What Are Your Plans for Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week?

- Home & Schools plan 3 or 5 days of activities; coordinate your plans with the administration’s.
- Some Home & Schools include everyone in the celebration (teachers, administration, bus drivers, crossing guards...).
- Form a staff appreciation sub-committee and try to recruit new volunteers!
- It's helpful for parents to have a solicitation letter when they approach businesses for prizes/donations.
- Solicit donations from parents (money, bottles of wine...).
- Freebies (available during the pandemic) are not as plentiful any more.
- Items Home & Schools have given to teachers/staff: Lindt chocolate balls, lottery tickets, notebooks from Costco, coffee days, baked goods, lunch (pot lucks are less expensive than catered meals), care packages.
- Initiatives: Paint the staff room, buy a microwave/coffee maker, decorate classroom doors, have a fun trivia game for the teachers, have raffle prizes, clean the staff kitchen.
- Ask students to make a poster/card for the teachers; ask students for one word to describe their teacher and create word cloud artwork.

As you can see, we covered a lot of material at this lively Zoom meeting. Be sure to join us for our next Regional Council "fireside chat" this winter.

Karen Henchey,  
*Communications Officer*

## News for You



### Leaders in Higher Education Discuss CAQ Proposals on Higher University Tuition Fees and the Increase in the Number of Required CEGEP French Courses

*A Summary Report By Brian Rock*

ON THE EVENING OF Wednesday, November 22nd, over 30 people attended a virtual meeting about higher education and the issues our English institutions are currently facing in this province. The event was organized by the QFHSA along with the COalition For the Future of English Education in Québec (COFFEE-QC) and the Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of the History of Québec (ComECH-QC).

The meeting could not have come at a better time given the CAQ government's announcement in October that it would significantly increase tuition fees at Quebec's English-language universities for English Canadians residing outside the province. Meanwhile, Quebec's English-language CEGEPs find themselves scrambling to adapt to the government's new requirement for three additional French courses for all students.

At the meeting, Richard Y. Bourhis, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), provided an in-depth historical perspective on the declining enrollment in Quebec's English schools. Well known for his research in this area, Bourhis noted the following: "In 1971 there were 256,000 students in English primary & secondary schools. By 2018, there were only 96,235 students left in the English school system, representing only 37.5% of its original size in 1971. Bill 101 was successful in reducing access to English schools thus undermining its size." At the CEGEP level, Bill 96 has frozen enrollment levels in Quebec's five English-language CEGEPs until 2029. Bourhis summed up the situation as follows: "In the last 45 years, Quebecois majority governments have undermined the educational vitality of the English-speaking communities of Québec."

Bourhis then addressed the newest challenge for Quebec's institutions of higher learning: the tuition fee increases affecting Bishop's, Concordia, and McGill universities. Some of the reasons the Premier and his ministers

have given for the tuition increase: There is too much English spoken in the streets of Montreal; 25% of the university spots in Quebec are at English universities but Quebec's anglophone community represents only 9% of the province's population. Whatever the justification, it is clear that Quebec's English-language universities are finding themselves under attack. The government's changes are destined to strengthen Quebec's French institutions of higher learning while weakening the English ones. *Note that on December 14th, the Quebec government reduced the tuition hike, but added the new requirement that students from outside of Quebec must learn French.*



The meeting's second guest speaker, John McMahon, Director General of Vanier College CEGEP, described the steps English CEGEPs are taking to implement the changes required by Law 14 (Bill 96). He explained that as his college works through the process, it is trying to accomplish three things: (1) respect the law, (2) maximize student success, and (3) minimize the adverse impact on faculty and staff.

McMahon explained that students in English CEGEPs fall into two major categories: **Certificate Holders** (those who have a certificate of eligibility to receive instruction in English in Quebec) and **Non-Certificate Holders**. For simplicity, they are indicated as CHs and NCHs below.

#### *The following shows the changes happening in Quebec's English CEGEPs:*

- **Starting August 2023:** NCHs must write the French exit exam. (No easy feat as it is the French competency test used in French CEGEPs; CHs still write the English exit exam.)
- **As of August 2023:** NCHs are taking three *Français langue commun* courses (French literature courses) to prepare them for the French exit exam. They lost a complementary course to make room for the third

*Continued on the next page*

## News for You

course. CHs currently take two French-as-a-second-language courses.

- **Starting January 2024:** Priority admission will be given to CHs.
- **Starting August 2024:** All students will need to take a total of five French courses to complete their programs. How this will be accomplished depends on whether the student is a certificate holder or not. And how are CEGEPs adapting to the additional French course requirements? McMahon explains that it is a challenging and complex process at each college. He encourages parents to attend the CEGEP open houses in the new year to ask how this will be done at the college(s) their children are interested in.

A question-and-answer session followed, providing opportunities for many thought-provoking discussions that widened the knowledge of the audience on the future of higher education in the province.

To view Richard Bourhis's or John McMahon's powerpoint presentations, please visit our website ([qfhsa.org](http://qfhsa.org)). From the menu, select "Advocating for Our Parents and Community," then "Reports and Presentations." You can also use the following links:

- Richard Bourhis: <https://bit.ly/46WdMZW>
- John McMahon: <https://bit.ly/3NpmljA>

Professor Bourhis returned as a guest speaker on December 6th, 2023, at a virtual meeting of the QFHSA Rights Subcommittee. At the meeting, he talked about the six vitality clarification themes for the English-speaking communities of Quebec. Professor Bourhis's powerpoint presentation from this event is also available on our website. You can use this link: <https://bit.ly/3TpU3yG>.

During the November 22nd meeting, John McMahon said, "We need to change the discourse... This negative discourse that we (Quebec's English institutions of higher learning) are vectors of anglo-cization and therefore are to be blamed for any decline of French needs to stop and we need to address that." Further, McMahon said, "We can't tolerate the discrimination and the punitive measures that are exacted upon us simply to satisfy a nationalist rhetoric or nationalist agenda. We are Quebecois institutions, we have a role here, we need to stand firm on those measures."

These powerful words express the thoughts of many in Quebec's minority anglophone and allophone communi-

ties. Let us hope the government will take heed.

A big thank you to Richard Y. Bourhis, John McMahon, and my fellow members of the organizing team, David Cromwell, Natasha Drysdale, Carol Meindl, and Rosemary Murphy. Congratulations on a job well done.

### **Suggestions for Further Reading**

**A Snapshot of Poverty Among Quebec's English-Speaking Communities, a 2023 report from the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT).**

The report is available on the PERT website ([pertquebec.ca](http://pertquebec.ca)). From the Home Page, select "Reports" and search in the Employment Section. You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/3RHbyco>.

**Demographic Profiles of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities of Montreal, a 2023 report created by Joanne Pocock, Ph.D., for the Community Health & Social Services Network (CHSSN) based on data from the 2021 census.**

The report is available on the CHSSN website ([chssn.org](http://chssn.org)). On the Home Page, select "Document Centre" and search for "Demographic Profiles of Quebec's English-speaking Communities of Montréal." You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/3uWKYDr>.

*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 who now resides in Aylmer, Québec.*

*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 (ComECH-QC)**.*

A past president of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. (QFHSA), Brian recently returned as a member of its board of directors. He chairs the QFHSA Nominations Committee and the QFHSA Resolutions Subcommittee. He is also the vice-chair of the QFHSA Rights Subcommittee.

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



# The QFHSA's 2024 Awards



## Celebrate Exceptional Educators, Initiatives, and Volunteers

The QFHSA's Major Awards Program recognizes the important contributions of students, educators, and parents to Quebec education. Local Home and School Associations are invited to submit nominations for five major awards. ***The deadline for submissions is April 1st.***

### Pat Lewis Environmental Award

This award honours elementary or high-school level students for their outstanding efforts towards an environmental cause.

### Pat Lewis Humanitarian Award

This award honours elementary or high-school level students for their outstanding efforts towards a humanitarian cause.

### Gordon Paterson Award

This award recognizes an outstanding educator who has given long service to Quebec education and has encouraged the participation of parents.

### Lewis Peace Prize

This award recognizes an individual or group who contributes to a safe and peaceful school or community.

### Home & School Volunteer of the Year

This award is given to a longtime Home & School volunteer who has made a significant positive impact on Home & School and school life.

Images from Adobe Stock

## Celebrate Local Heroes: *The Golden Torch, Unsung Hero, and Newsletter Awards*

Each year, the QFHSA helps local Home and School Associations recognize the heroes in their midst—the volunteers who have made an important impact in their school communities. ***The deadline for submissions is April 15th.***

### The Golden Torch Award

This award recognizes Home & School Association or committee members who have demonstrated active leadership, organizational skills, encouragement of the participation of all volunteers, and whose dedication merits recognition locally and provincially.

### The Unsung Hero Award

This award recognizes Home & School and/or school volunteers for their valuable involvement in everyday school life. Their dedication merits recognition locally and provincially.

### The Newsletter Prize

This award recognizes the efforts of newsletter volunteer(s) to promote and showcase the Home & School's contribution to the school community.

### How to Submit Nominations for the QFHSA's Major and Local Awards

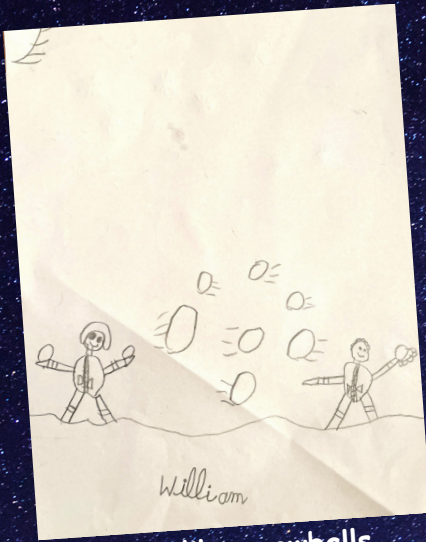
More information about all of the awards is available on our website [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org). From our Home Page, select "Events" on the left menu, then select "Awards." Choose the award from the list for more information and the nomination form. *Note: There is one nomination form for the Golden Torch and Unsung Hero Awards. The cost for the certificate and lapel pin for the award winners in these categories is \$12.50.*



# The Kids' Page

This page is for students in the federation's Home and School network. This time around, the topic is winter! Thank you to all of the students who participated in our Winter Drawing Challenge. We loved receiving your artwork! A special congratulations to Celeste, whose name was drawn for the \$50 Chapters/Indigo gift card.

## I LIKE WINTER BECAUSE...



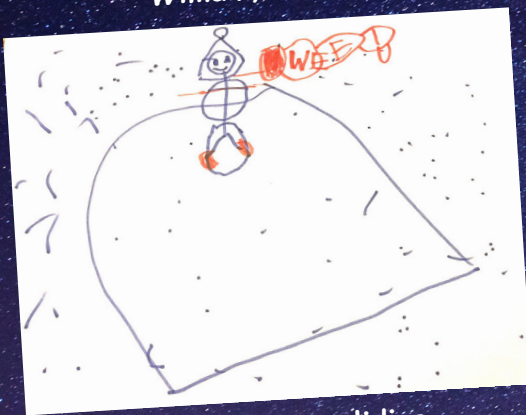
... I like snowballs.  
William, Grade 1



... I like snowball fights and Christmas decorations.  
Edwin, Grade 1



... I like decorating the Christmas tree.  
Aubree, Grade 1



... I like going sliding.  
Kyla, Kindergarten



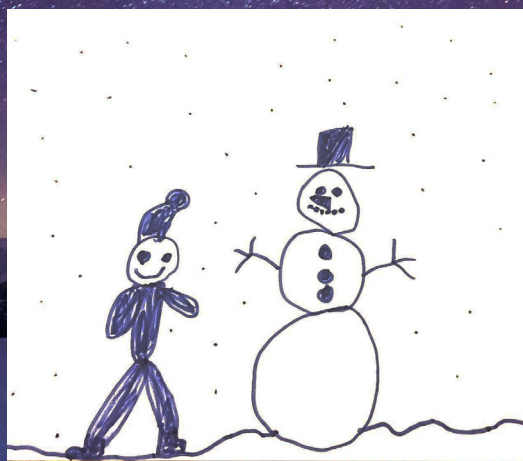
... of Christmas and the elves.  
Vincent, Grade 2



... there is Christmas and we opened gifts.  
Justin, Grade 3



... there's puffy cozy snowsuits!  
Avery, Grade 4



... I like making snowmen!  
Riley, Grade 2



... I like to make forts.  
Celeste, Grade 5



## A Few Words From Membership Services: Winter Reminders

For the first year post-COVID, local Home and School Associations seem to be running at full speed with a great variety of activities. I am sure that the strike days presented some challenges, but Home and Schools are used to adapting to changing circumstances, and, in these circumstances, it really helps to have a solid volunteer base. Kudos to you!

It was great to meet some of you in person at the QFHSA's Fall Conference. Hopefully more parents will join us next year to attend the workshops and interact with other volunteers.

### Reminders:

**Documents and Fees:** Please note that all documents and fees are overdue. Associations that have

not submitted the \$50 administration fee will not be included on the QFHSA's insurance renewal. Reminder emails will be/were sent out in late December/early January.

**Constitution and By-Laws:** Look for clauses that need updating, start a subcommittee, and send the changes to your members by your association's deadline.

**Recruitment for 2024-2025:** Start recruiting for next year's executive positions. Invite interested parties to your executive meetings so that they can see what transpires behind the scenes.

Cheers,

Marlyn, QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator  
[marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org](mailto:marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org)

### Nominations for the QFHSA Board of Directors

The QFHSA board of directors is a group of volunteers dedicated to advocating for parents and striving to have the best education system for students. If you or someone you know has a passion for education, please consider joining the QFHSA board.

As the QFHSA is a provincial-wide organization, it would be advantageous to have board members from all over the province—including the Eastern Shores, Eastern Townships, Central Quebec, Monteregie, and Laval/Laurentians regions.

For more information about the QFHSA board of directors, please email [info@qfhsa.org](mailto:info@qfhsa.org) (Attention Brian Rock, QFHSA Nominations Committee Chair).

## Update from the QFHSA Literacy Subcommittee

### Holiday Basket Book Giveaway

A total of 16 local Home and School Associations received books donated by First Book Canada. Approximately 500 books were handed out.



Thank you to elves Lisa and Stacy for delivering books to their sister associations on behalf of the QFHSA Literacy Subcommittee.

### "Reluctant Reader" Grants

Grants are available for high school Home and School Associations for students reading below grade level. Stay tuned for an email in January about this year's grants.

### A Thank You from the Eastern Shores



The Shigawake Port-Daniel Home & School Association would like to extend a huge thank you to the QFHSA Literacy Subcommittee for the three boxes of beautiful books they sent us for our students.

Our Grade 6 students helped display all the books and assisted the younger students in choosing a book that they wanted. Our students truly appreciated the gift and were able to find books that they had not read before.



Thank you once again to the QFHSA for helping to encourage our students to read.

Carl Garrett, Shigawake Port-Daniel Home & School Association



Top image from Adobe Stock

## 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](mailto:news@qfhsa.org).



### Spine Tingling Adventures at East Hill Elementary's Terror Hill Halloween Event



Our young thrill seekers embarked on a heart-pounding journey through a Hollywood-themed haunted house filled with chills and thrills.



For those who preferred a less terrifying experience, we had a special room set up with Halloween-themed games.



After all the excitement, the little ghouls and goblins were treated to spook-tacular goodies in their classrooms. It was a fang-tastic day of Halloween fun for all!

*Submitted by Tania Mendonça,  
East Hill Home and School Association*



Background image from Adobe Stock

# Focus on the Locals



## Every Month Brings Fun at Children's World Academy

Children's World Academy Home & School was busy this fall as usual!

First we kicked off the year with our annual Corn Roast, which was brought back after a 4 year hiatus! The whole school community enjoyed this ever loved event, which included giant games, hot dogs and corn, cotton candy and popcorn machines, a bake sale, a temporary tattoo station, and a lot of FUN. As per usual tradition, the Grade 6 students helped shuck the corn and all of our leftover food was donated to a local food bank.



In October, we decorated the lobby and treated the students to some Halloween goodies including a mini pumpkin, toys and treats, and a mini cupcake! Leftovers were donated to a local K-4 class.



In November, we kicked off a chocolate bar fundraiser, which was wildly successful! We also had a winter clothing drive and treated our staff to



an amazing brunch to thank them for all they do!

We've also been supporting our teachers throughout the strike, offering them coffee, treats, and Hot Paws for their hands and feet.

And, of course, during all this we can't forget our Thursday fundraising lunches! Pizza, pasta, and brunch meals are offered and they have been a big hit with the students!



Now on to the Christmas activities! We're having a Gingerbread Café, ornament decorating, and Breakfast with Santa!

*Submitted by Kimberly Jones,  
Children's World Academy Home and School Association*



Image from Adobe Stock

# Focus on the Locals

## Back in Action at Genesis Elementary!

At Genesis Home & School Association, we've had a very busy start to the school year!

### We're Fundraising...

In September, the Genesis apparel fundraiser was re-launched. Parents could purchase hoodies, T-shirts, caps, and tuques.

The popular pizza lunch fundraiser and TCBY also kicked off, and it looks like it will be a record-breaking year!

The traditional chocolate bar drive took place at the end of September into October. This brought in a profit of approximately \$8000.

### We're Organizing Events...

On September 15, the Genesis community was invited to a Welcome Back celebration in the school yard. Inflat-able games, exciting raffle prizes, and food vendors were available. Over 400 people were in attendance and the event generated a profit of over \$12,000!

Teachers and students were also treated to a corn roast and hot dog lunch. Volunteers also took part in the annual Terry Fox Run. The decorating team spruced up the school entrance with seasonal colours and decor.



For Halloween, a Haunted Laboratory was created and animated by volunteers. The children also participated in a Mad Science workshop and received a treat bag!



To wrap up 2023, many Holidays activities are planned, including the traditional Breakfast with Santa.

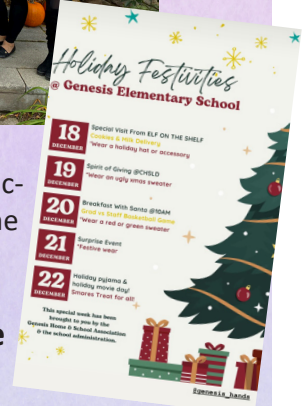
### And We're Dedicating the Funds to Worthy Causes...

Home and School allocated funds to each teacher's wish list and organized a sweet table to express our gratitude towards the staff.

Most of the funds raised are going towards the ongoing goal of purchasing air conditioning units for each classroom.

Many thanks to the dedicated members of the executive committee, to the team of volunteers for their time and talent, to the community for its generosity, and most importantly, to our principal, Ms Garofalo, for her unwavering support and enthusiasm!

Genesis truly is the little school with the big heart!



Submitted by Patty Marinelli,  
Genesis Elementary Home and School Association

# Focus on the Locals



## Making Wonderful Memories at St. Charles

We blinked and it's 2024! In the short few months since this school year began, our St. Charles community has accomplished a great deal thanks to the dedication and support of school staff, volunteers, and St. Charles families. With their help, St. Charles Home and School has been able to hold successful activities and fundraisers, enriching student life and creating cherished memories along the way!

Families helped to raise money for the school in a number of ways. There was our very successful annual Fall Chocolate Fundraising Campaign, Oliver's Labels, and FlipGive. Pizza, Dagwoods and pasta lunches have been a hit and allow parents and students a well-needed break from making lunches. This fall, we were also very excited to introduce our Fall Clothing Sale where parents (and even some grandparents) could purchase St. Charles school clothing via our website. The clothing sale will continue for the duration of the year. But, of course, the fall was not only about raising money. The fun events we planned helped to make the first part of the 2023/24 school year memorable for all.

### Halloween Dance

On October 31st, the Grade 6 students costumed up, not just for Halloween but also for the very much anticipated Grad Halloween Dance. The grad committee was happy to welcome Frank the Skeleton, who helped them bone-up on their decorating skills. Students were then treated to a pizza lunch, snacks and other goodies, including their much-anticipated free grad T-shirts. A huge thank you to the staff who planned the fun, games, and fashion show.



### Holiday Market

We kicked off the holiday season on Saturday, November 11th with our first ever Holiday Market where artisans and vendors sold their wonderful creations. There were baked goods, bath bombs, wreaths, jams, bows, jewelry, knitted items, and more. Children enjoyed craft-making, face painting, hot chocolate, and cotton candy while their parents shopped at the market. It was a great way to get in to the holiday spirit.



### Family Night

On the evening of Friday, December 1st, students returned to school with their families to enjoy our very first Family Night. Everyone had a great time playing bingo, winning prizes, and enjoying baked goods and snacks from our concession stand. We look forward to hosting another Family Night in the spring.



## Focus on the Locals

As we begin the new year, we look forward to planning more activities and creating even more wonderful memories at St. Charles!

### *A Holiday Celebration for Home & School Volunteers*

On December 8th, Home and School volunteers had a potluck gathering—the best way to wish each other season’s greetings! Everyone had fun hanging out and getting to know each other better. There were lots of laughs during our “Wrap-a-Crap” silly gift exchange. We had so much fun together that we’re already planning our next get together!



### *Breakfast with Santa*

Santa came to St. Charles on December 21st and spent a fun-filled day with us! For this occasion, everyone was dressed in their best holiday jammies. The day started with a fun breakfast in the gym served by our very own Grade 6 elves. Fun was had while each grade listened to holiday music, coloured, ate, and had a chance to take a group photo with Santa.



After breakfast, our wonderful volunteer elves did a magical clean up and turned the gym into the North Pole where Santa put each grade through some vigorous elf training games to see if students had what it took to be a real North Pole elf. Once they succeeded in doing so, Santa gave the children special treats from Mrs. Claus. Lots of fun was had by all!

A big thank you to Santa, all our volunteers, the staff, and community for their hard work. It was a fantastic Breakfast with Santa.



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

### *See You Soon in the "Focus on the Locals"?*

We would love to see your Home & School in the "Focus on the Locals" section.

Here are the submission deadlines:

- Spring Issue: **March 11**
- Summer Issue: **June 19**

Tell us what you are up to... and please send photos! Email your news to [news@qfhsa.org](mailto:news@qfhsa.org).



## 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](mailto:news@qfhsa.org)

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