

VOLUME 58 ISSUE 2

FALL 2020

QFHSA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR HOME AND SCHOOL MEMBERS

Thriving in Tumultuous Times

School during a pandemic, postponed school board elections, legal challenges, etc.

The Fall Conference

Under the Immediate Circumstances, p. 7

A Back-to-School Like No Other:

How Home and Schools Are Managing, p. 6

Being There for Your Teen:

Tips from the parenting webinar, p. 22



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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*A huge thank you to the families who
generously shared their photos for this
issue.*

Back to School—*The Fall 2020 Edition*

MARCH TURNED INTO APRIL, and spring turned into summer. But what a strange summer it was! We ventured out to visit local destinations and rediscover our province, and we missed relatives who could not visit us in this weird summer of COVID-19.

By mid-summer (and even earlier), our thoughts turned to back to school. Would we be having a first day at school? Or would most of us continue to learn remotely in the Fall of 2020?

When the government unveiled its revised Back-to-School Plan on August 10th, Education Minister Jean-François Roberge made his expectations very clear: Schools were to reopen as planned with the vast majority of Quebec students returning for in-person learning (full time for most; a combination of at-home and in-person learning for Secondary IV and V).



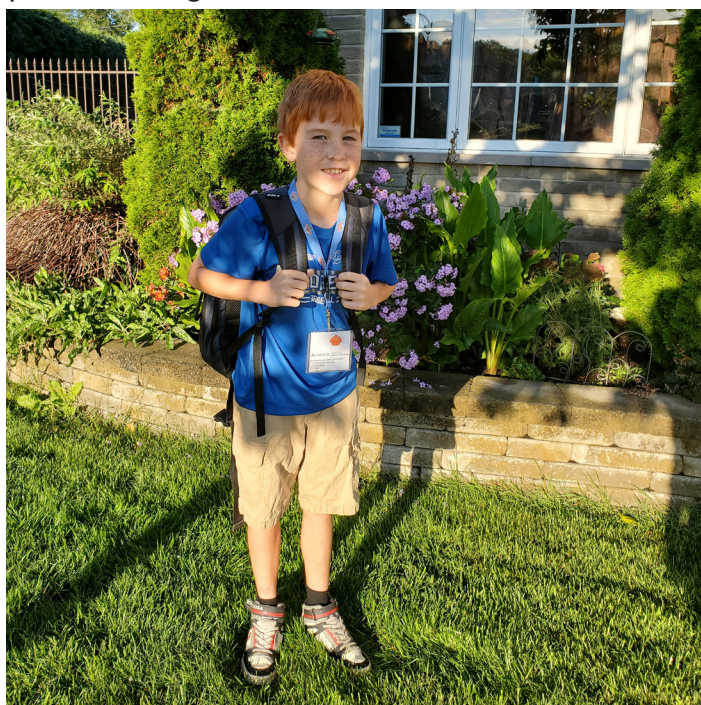
Malia's First Day of Pre-Kindergarten

Then the race was on for teachers and school administrators to figure out how to implement the necessary health measures *and* create a warm and positive environment in which their students could thrive. In addition, all of this needed to be accomplished in time for the first day of school in late August. A huge task? No doubt about it!

Thanks to the dedication of our teachers, school administrators, school support staff, custodians, bus drivers, lunch and daycare monitors, and many others, our schools have made the very best of a hugely

challenging situation. For this, we are all very thankful. Let us also remember the important role parents have played in this back-to-school adventure. Parents across the province deserve a huge thank you for their perseverance in what has been a very challenging year for all.

And the best news of all? Many children, some for the first time ever, were able to experience a first day of school on school property—a first day to see old friends and meet new ones, a first day to meet their new teachers, a first day of what everyone hopes will be a long, uninterrupted year of learning.



Nate's First Day of Grade 6

For other students, first day meant a return to the computer at home to learn from an unavoidable distance. On this page and throughout this edition of the *QFHSA News*, we are showcasing the lovely first-day photos families have shared with us. Whether at home or at school, our children shared their excitement, hope, and optimism for a new year of learning. ***We are back to school!***

An important final note: We are also thankful for the volunteers in local H&S associations who are working very hard to bring fun and joy to this unusual school year. You can find out more about their amazing achievements in this newsletter.

Executive Director's Message

Innovation and Adaptation *Under the Immediate Circumstances*

THE QFHSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS chose "Under the immediate circumstances" as the theme for the 2020 Annual General Meeting and Fall Conference with a bit of humour. The board knew we were all facing unprecedented times for ourselves and our H&S associations and were all uncertain of where things were headed.

The spring saw our associations re-assess their remaining programming, embark on processing refunds and credits, and assist with Grade 6 and high-school graduations. Once their fiscal years were concluded, they were looking forward to a summer where they would have time to adapt their family life to the new reality. Parents found themselves struggling to find summer activities for their kids without the usual summer camps and travel vacation options. Everyone was at home. However, it was a lovely summer, weather-wise, and children are ever adaptable.

As fall approached, Home and School leadership started to think about the coming school year, and what their school administrations would allow in terms of parental involvement and volunteering in the school. Much would depend on whether H&S volunteers would have access to the building. Without that, there are serious limits on what H&Ss can bring to the students. The uncertainty of on again/off again in-class education has made it all the more difficult.

One of the strengths of our Home and School leadership has been its capacity for innovation and adaptation.

Many Home & Schools have risen to the challenge and, sitting down with their principals, have discussed what events/activities could be brought to the school, how much was needed to fund them, and what fundraisers could be engaged in to reach these new goals.

Some long-term projects, set to be complete this fall, such as the purchase and installation of school playground equipment, have had to be set back another year. Other annual activities have been tweaked to conform to new restrictions imposed by the ministry.



Annabelle's First Day of Kindergarten

The QFHSA decided to extend the 2019-2020 Home and School membership year to mid-November to give local leadership a chance to adapt membership campaigns to fit these new circumstances. Every year, there are new Kindergarten parents ready and eager to be involved in school life and it is important to let them know there is still a role they can play within an active Home and School.



Through our Regional Council meetings in April, June, and September, we learned that many H&Ss were enjoying increased participation in their meetings once they switched to holding them online. Parents, finding they no longer needed to rush supper to get to the school on time, find a babysitter, or deal with parking, could now budget time to participate. A definite plus!

Fundraisers are still being planned and will be implemented, the vast majority undoubtedly to be carried out online. Cookie dough, cheese, coffee, citrus fruits, holiday wreaths, Fundscrip, and Scholastic book fairs are all campaigns that can still work in this new environment—provided there are sufficient volunteers.

We recommend that local leadership request to join the [QFHSA Think Tank](#) Facebook group and share their ideas, questions, and solutions with their sister associations. Let us know what you need and we will all help to find the resources.

We are all, as ever, in this together. Home and School has been around for 100 years. We can survive this *immediate circumstance*.

Carol Meindl, *Executive Director*

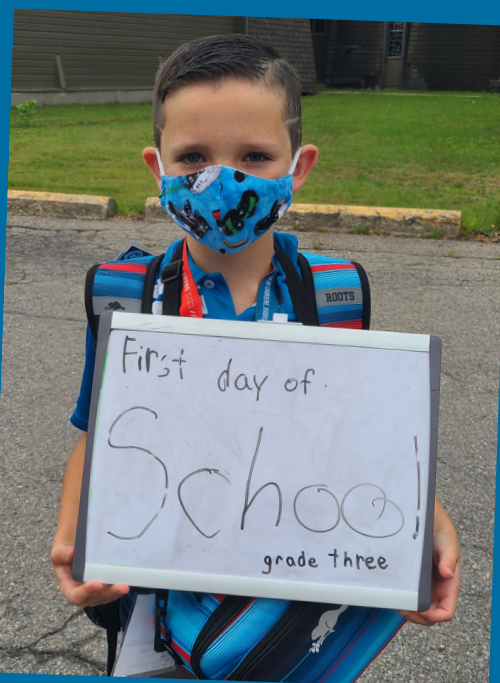
Coming Up — Dates to Remember

November 16-26	QFHSA Fall Leadership Conference for Parents— <i>Evening Zoom Workshops</i>
Late November/ Early December	Regional Councils

First Day Smiles



Anabel, Grade 1



Nicholas, Grade 3



Chloé, Pre-Kindergarten



Jett, Kindergarten



We welcome your letters!

Please share your thoughts with us about this newsletter and its contents. We welcome your comments and suggestions! Email news@qfhsa.org.

News for You

The September Regional Councils:

How Home and Schools Are Managing the Start of an Unusual Year...

IN MID-SEPTEMBER, three regional councils were held via Zoom. Although there were fewer participants than last spring's meetings, the conversation was lively. Amongst other topics, Home and Schools were asked to share their opinions on the back-to-school rollout, volunteering/fundraising, meetings, and allocation requests.

We discussed all the creative ways our schools are managing the crisis—by making use of all possible school entrances to keep classes separate; by online curriculum nights; by organizing events like Photo Day outside; and at one school—by exchanging information at the school's "COVID Team" meetings (attended by representatives from the school's administration, H&S and governing board as well as parents and medical experts).

Anecdotally, we learned that the end-of-day pick-up by parents is busier than usual. With many parents still working from home, they are now available to meet their children at the school day's end.

The general consensus was that although parents are not allowed in the building, Home and Schools are ready and willing to help wherever possible and are looking for ways to bring the fun back to school life. Some ideas Home and Schools are considering include funding items for outdoor activities and classrooms; Halloween celebrations; and free treats for all.

A myriad of online fundraising options was discussed. Home and Schools with one-day-event fundraisers will be feeling the pinch. Also, it is a challenge to distribute fundraising products when the school building cannot be

accessed. Unspent funds from last year will be used this year as fundraising will be more difficult and activities limited.

Home and Schools have been allocating funds for such COVID-related items as disinfecting products, masks, fanny packs, and lanyards. Some larger items have been requested, but more research is required before allocations can be brought to the membership for discussion.

It was agreed that moving meetings online was a "game changer." Many Home and Schools reported that attendance at their meetings has increased with the introduction of video-conferencing. Given the success of online meetings, Home and Schools should look at changing their by-laws in the spring to reflect this new and very viable option.

Congratulations to Home and Schoolers who (as usual) are creative, adaptable, and always willing to lend a hand. It is always a pleasure to hear the great ideas that are shared with the group. I look forward to more lively discussions at the next round of regional councils in late November/early December.

Marlyn Brownrigg, *Membership Services Coordinator*

Did you know...?

The QFHSA is now on Instagram. You can find us at [instagram.com/qfhsa/](https://www.instagram.com/qfhsa/).

Follow us today!



Fall Conference



The QFHSA's 2020 Fall Conference: *Under the Immediate Circumstances*



Every year, the QFHSA organizes a conference for its membership and this year is no different. However, the 2020 edition of the fall conference will be quite unlike any held previously—in keeping with the exceptional times in which we are living.

As the saying goes, “Necessity is the mother of invention.” Our reinvented fall conference will be held online via Zoom. Join us for **seven evening workshops**

over a 2-week period. Each workshop is 1½ to 2 hours long.

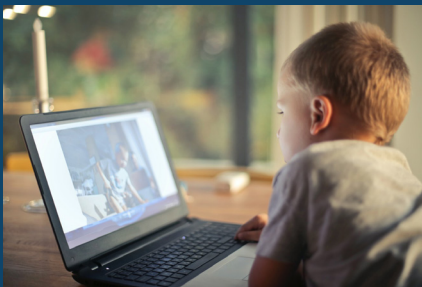
While we are sorry we cannot meet in person at our traditional day-long event, we are pleased to offer this alternate format. Read all about the interesting workshops we have planned for you on the following pages.

See you online!

How to Register—Fall Conference

You are invited to register for as many workshops as you wish. **The workshops are free, but space is limited.** Register for each workshop individually by clicking on the link in the workshop description. **You will receive an email to confirm your registration.**

Photo by Andrea Piacquadio from Pexels



Workshop 1: Media Literacy: *Reading Between the Lines in our Digital World*

**Tuesday, November 17th, 2020
7:00 p.m.**

Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze and evaluate the many complex messages presented through mass media. It focusses on helping young people become more careful and critical consumers of media messages so that they can make more informed choices about their health, purchases, and values. As parents, we are all well aware of the safety and stranger danger concerns surrounding the internet, but is stranger danger really the biggest threat to our children as they grow to become digital citizens? What about the spread of misinformation online? What about the marketing and advertising behind social media? Are we educating our children to think critically about the media they consume? This workshop will examine the less spoken about, quickly expanding list of forces and factors in online media that skew perspective and leverage naïveté. We will also share ideas on what, if anything, can be done. We will also explore how to discuss this important topic with our children. The 45-minute presentation will be followed by 45 minutes dedicated to questions and discussion.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/32f9q1z>

About our Presenter: Samantha Whipps is a mother of two elementary-aged children and a marketing and live events professional with a background in television production. She has spent the last 20 years working with international brands and marketing agencies to strategize how to connect with audiences through storytelling and live experiences.



Fall Conference

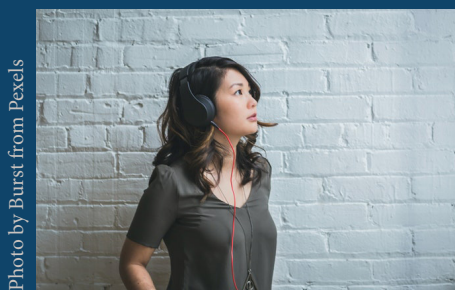


Photo by Burst from Pexels

Workshop 2: Head and Heart— *Caring for our Emotional and Mental Health*

Wednesday, November 18th, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Caring for our mental and emotional health can be a delicate balancing act on the best of days... For many of us, these challenging times are taking things to a whole other level!

When under significant and prolonged stress, we often (unknowingly) resort to self-sabotaging thoughts and behaviours. This webinar seeks to strengthen our awareness of these subconscious reactions and lessen their negative hold over us. We will explore tools and strategies to support a stronger sense of control and balance—both inside and out.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/360XzoU>

About our Presenter: Family Life Educator Karen Delage has worked with the Youth Protection mandate for over 15 years. Resolute in empowering parents with prevention-based education and skills, she offers various webinars, group work, and one-on-one parent coaching. Please do not hesitate to contact her for more information: parenteenfocus@gmail.com/514-575-5591

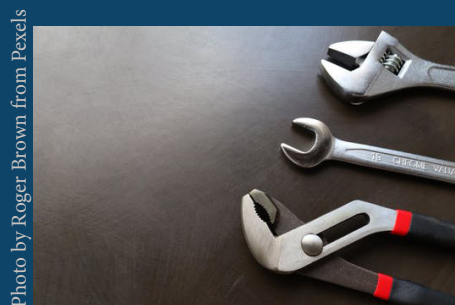
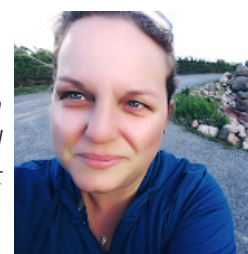


Photo by Roger Brown from Pexels

Workshop 3: Vocational Education—Follow Your Passion

Thursday, November 19th, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Learn about vocational training programs across the province of Quebec with Maggie Soldano, Director of Continuing Education at the Lester B. Pearson School Board. From high-school students to adults seeking a career change, vocational training is well worth considering. Find out more in this informative workshop. The presentation will be approximately 1 hour and will be followed by a 1-hour question period—so there will be plenty of time for your questions!

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/2JqJLwf>

About our Presenter: Maggie Soldano has over 20 years of experience in the adult and vocational sector and she firmly believes in promoting the value of vocational education to the young and young at heart. She is a member of the Provincial Organization of Continuing Education Directors, English (PROCEDE) as well as a member of the Comité de coordination TRÉAQ (Table des responsables de l'éducation des adultes du Québec), where she represents the nine English school boards.



Fall Conference

Photo by August de Richelieu from Pexels



Workshop 4: School at Home

Monday, November 23rd, 2020
7:00 p.m.

During these challenging times, it isn't easy for parents, whether they have one or many children at home, to set up conditions that are conducive to online learning. Parents have to contend with many variables ranging from bandwidth concerns and hardware requirements to privacy and ergonomics, not to mention curricular challenges. This interactive workshop will address many of the concerns parents have as they attempt to ensure their children continue along a successful learning pathway. In addition, parents will gain a better understanding of their complicated roles as they seek to support their children.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/3eo0oEr>

About our Presenters: Dr. Michael Canuel is the CEO of LEARN Quebec and co-founder of the Canadian e-Learning Network. For this presentation, he is joined by Carolina Toteda, Program Integration, Marketing and Communications Lead for LEARN and the parent of a child learning from home.



Workshop 5: The ABC's of Canadian Black History

Tuesday, November 24th, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Now more than ever, we understand the importance of teaching our children about equality, respect, and empathy for all members of our society. In her workshop, Dorothy Williams, M.A., Ph.D., will introduce *The ABC's of Canadian Black History* kit, a useful tool for educators to explore African Canadian history and its cultural heritage. This cross-curricular kit is the inaugural project of Blackbiblio.com Inc., a company founded by Dr. Williams to share the African Canadian experience. The kit includes games, puzzles, and flash cards that introduce diversity and teach our children about history, geography, settlement, justice and the law, personal achievement, role modelling, perseverance and belonging.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/3jXXabC>

About our Presenter: Dr. Dorothy Williams holds a Master's degree in History and Library Studies and a Doctorate in African Canadian Bibliography and Archives. The author of several books on Montreal Black history, she has worked extensively with the provincial and federal governments, lending her voice to a number of projects and dossiers.



Fall Conference

Photo by Ketut Subiyanto from Pexels



Workshop 6: It's 2020—Is Now a Good Time to Move our Home & School “ONLINE”?

Wednesday, November 25th, 2020
7:00 p.m.

What does online H&S look like? We'll go over what it means to have your H&S “online.” Learn the ins and outs of the online system. Topics covered include mailing lists, online payments, class lists, communicating with parents, fundraiser coordinating, and more! Experience how the system makes your H&S better. Walk through the process as a parent and a fundraiser coordinator and experience how much easier it is for everyone.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/3jX3sbJ>

***About our Presenter:** As a software developer by training, Corinna Rake has always had a passion for using technology to solve problems and design efficient solutions. She has been building websites for small business owners since 2003 and volunteered her time creating and operating a fully customized, online solution for Clearpoint H&S (in Pointe-Claire) over the past 6 years. Corinna loves teaching others how to use the solutions she has built in simple, beginner walk-you-through videos.*



Photo by Ketut Subiyanto from Pexels



Workshop 7: Supporting Your Child's Physical Literacy Development at Home

Thursday, November 26th, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life. This workshop will help parents develop a more comprehensive understanding of physical literacy's role and importance for elementary school-aged children. It includes practical examples of how it can be acquired through fun and engaging activities at home.

REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP: <https://bit.ly/3mRfSUh>

***About our Presenters:** Joanne Lawson has a Bachelor's degree in Education and an Honours degree in Physical and Health Education. She brings her years of experience as a teacher to her dual role as a program director and curriculum/resource developer with the Champions for Life Foundation. Christopher Laurin is the Director of Marketing and Business Development for the Champions for Life Foundation. With over 30 years of experience in fitness and recreation operations, he specializes in innovative program development, marketing, strategic and operational planning, and staff development. Christopher is also a certified group exercise/cycling instructor and has a Bachelor's degree in Leisure Studies from Concordia University.*



A Right Is a Right Is a Right!

A Commentary By Brian Rock

Regarding Law 40, The Education Act I-13.3, and the Act Respecting School Elections E-2.3

CONGRATULATIONS to the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) for its recent successes in legally challenging the sections of **Law 40: An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance** that amended the **Education Act I-13.3** and the **Act respecting school elections to elect certain members of the boards of directors of English-language school service centres E-2.3**.



Introduced by Minister of Education and Higher Education Jean-François Roberge, Bill 40 was passed in the National Assembly of Québec during the wee hours of Saturday morning, February 8th, 2020, when the majority Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) government used its powers of closure.

Three judges of the Court of Appeal of Quebec heard arguments on Monday, September 14th, 2020, regarding Law 40 and its effects on Section 23 of the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** of the **Constitution Act of 1982**, which grants official minorities in Canada management and control of their schools. Their ruling maintained the stay on the suspension of the application of Law 40 to English school boards pending a decision on the merits of the case

before the Superior Court of Quebec. Thank goodness that Section 33 of the Charter protects Section 23 from the application of *the notwithstanding clause*.

Also closely involved in the defence of English school boards is the **Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-Language Education in Quebec (APPELE-Quebec)**. The QFHSA is ably represented on **APPELE-QC** by our president, Linton Garner, and our executive director, Carol Meindl.



Regarding Law 21: An Act respecting the laicity of the State

Coalition Inclusion Québec (CIQ) should receive kudos for its efforts in challenging Law 21, legislation that prevents public workers in positions of authority from wearing religious symbols respecting the Laicity of the State.

Section 2 of the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** states that everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- freedom of conscience and religion;
- freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- freedom of association.



It is extremely unfortunate that Section 33 (1) allows for the use of the notwithstanding clause:

“Parliament or the legislature of a province may expressly declare in an Act of Parliament or of the legislature, as the case may be, that the Act or a provision thereof shall operate notwithstanding a provision included in section 2 or sections 7 to 15 of this **Charter**.”

It is especially unfortunate since Section 3 of the **Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms of Québec** (Chapter C-12) states:

1. Every person is the possessor of the fundamental freedoms, including freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association. (1975, c. 6, s. 3.)

Bill 21 was introduced in the National Assembly by Minister of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusiveness Simon Jolin-Barrette. On Thursday, March

Continued on Page 12

News for You

A Right Is a Right Is a Right!

Continued from page 11

28th, 2019, the CAQ government applied the notwithstanding clause in Bill 21. Then on Sunday, June 16th, 2019, using closure, the majority CAQ government passed Bill 21.

QFHSA Executive Director Carol Meindl spearheaded the QFHSA's participation in the "NON A LA LOI 21" button campaign and has been representing our organization so well

on the Coalition Inclusion Québec.

These last several months bring to mind Clifford Lincoln, former Quebec Minister of the Environment and MNA, and former Federal Member of Parliament, and his famous statement during a speech in the National Assembly in 1989: "Rights are rights are rights!"

Brian Rock, B.A., M.Ed., is the Chairman of the QFHSA Rights Committee and

the Immediate Past President of the QFHSA. A former school principal with the Eastern Shores School Board, he writes a monthly column, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," for the Aylmer Bulletin, the Pontiac Journal, and the West Quebec Post, delving into the mysterious dealings in education, politics, and history, as well as other subjects of current interest.

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



The QFHSA continues to support **the ongoing opposition to Bill 21.**

The court hearing began on November 2nd, 2020 and is expected to last for several weeks. The ultimate decision on this case will have far-reaching consequences for this province and for the entire country.

Would you like to know more about Bill 40 and its impact on English education?

The Quebec Provincial Association of Retired School Educators (QPARSE) is organizing a virtual meeting on the topic and you are invited! Here are the details:

Upcoming Event



Update on Bill 40 and its Impact on Public English-language Education in Quebec

At Issue: *Why elected English School Boards Matter*



Guest Speaker **GEOFFREY KELLEY**

Former MNA and Co-Chair of APPELE-Québec, the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-Language Education in Quebec

WHEN: Thursday, November 12, 2020
TIME: 10:00 A.M.
WHERE: On Zoom

Please contact the QFHSA office at info@qfhsa.org to sign up for this event.

ELECTION! BUT WHICH ONE?

WITH THE PASSING OF BILL 40 INTO LAW back in February, French school boards were abolished, elections for commissioners were a thing of the past, and school service centres with appointed boards of directors were now the new normal. English school boards were given a grace period until elections would be held November 1st to elect parent and community representatives to our school service centres. That was what I was preparing for, in my role as the returning officer for the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

Elections Quebec hosted three workshops on how to inform and prepare parents and community members to be nominated for these newly-created board positions. I had been invited to a Zoom meeting of the LBPSB Parents' Committee to talk about **what a parent needed to do to be nominated for a director position**. I answered many queries by members of the community who also wished to be directors. Then, at the beginning of August, Justice Lussier granted the English boards a "stay." Law 40 was put aside for the nine English boards and now returning officers were given three workshops on how to prepare for nominations **for people wishing to run for the commissioners positions**. But wait, the CAQ government decided to challenge that stay. So, which group was now running for office?

Those first two weeks in August were like being in a *Twilight Zone* episode; we really had no idea in which direction we were headed. None of the nine returning officers wanted to spend board monies to prepare for both types of elections, but we were running out of time. Then, on August 17th, one day before governing

boards had to be in place, the government lost its appeal and the elections for school board commissioners were back on!



Photo by Artem Podrez from Pexels

This was still not an easy task for many people. Due to the pandemic, safety protocols were put in place to gather support signatures. Ten were needed for those wishing to be commissioners; fifty for the chair. One had to wear a mask, keep his/her distance from the supporter, have one signature per page and sanitize, sanitize, sanitize. History could record these elections as being the cleanest of all.

Many incumbents were acclaimed in the nine boards. Only two boards, Sir Wilfred Laurier and Lester B. Pearson, had candidates to hold elections for chair.

People were afraid to go out for signatures and, more importantly, people were afraid to go out to vote. Seniors flooded the phone lines asking for another way they could vote. When the number of COVID cases began rising again and Montreal was declared a red zone, nobody wanted to go out to vote. Thankfully, the health minister in his capacity to protect public health made an Order-in-Council on October 7th to postpone the School Board Elections of November 1st until further notice. Acclaimed commissioners are in and those running for office will have to wait on the sidelines until the government says, "Go."

Rosemary Murphy,
Executive Vice-President, QFHSA
Vice-President, Canadian Home & School Federation
Returning Officer, Lester B. Pearson School Board

News for You

Learning with

The ABC's of Canadian Black History

The *ABC's of Canadian Black History* Kit features cross-curricular content adapted to Quebec Education Program (QEP) goals. The kit includes games, puzzles, flash cards, a glossary, and numerous discussion prompts. This pedagogical tool has 26 lesson plans and thus is flexible so that all public-school teachers can quickly introduce diversity and engage students about inclusion, history, geography, settlement, justice and the law, personal achievement, role modelling, perseverance and belonging, to name a few topics.



celebrating Canadian Black history becomes much more than an activity for a few weeks in February.

The kit goes way beyond the Black heroes and celebrities we usually tend to celebrate by delving into the history and lives of Black Canadians. Educators will find that the wide scope of the kit will serve as an excellent resource they can access year-round.

Talk to your H&S about ordering an *ABC's of Canadian Black History* kit for your school library today. Email the QFHSA office at info@qfhsa.org for

Help support teachers and educators to ensure that information on our cost-sharing program for the kit.



**CANADIAN
PARENTS
FOR FRENCH**

Funding Available!

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) will support your school's in-person or virtual French-as-a-Second-Language event. Available from the Mary Joyce Booth Fund, the \$500 grant supports activities that promote the use of French and bring communities together. To be eligible, the activity or event must occur between January 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021.

You can apply for the grant at <https://bit.ly/3hsuwOS>

Deadline for Applications: December 1, 2020

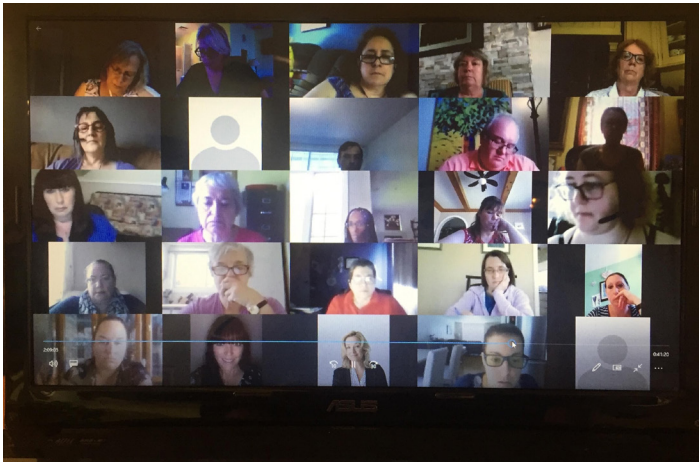
Founded in 1977 by parents who wanted to ensure that children would have the opportunity to become bilingual in the Canadian school system, CPF has grown into a nation-wide organization. Quebec is served by the Quebec-Nunavut Branch of the CPF.

QFHSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) 2020

Under the immediate circumstances...

EVERY YEAR, THE QFHSA PLANS and holds an annual general meeting (AGM) to fulfill its obligations as a charitable organization and to provide an opportunity for our local association delegates to review and enact policies, direct organizational activity, and network with one another. Usually this event is held at the Novotel Hotel in St. Laurent and is followed by a wonderful awards banquet. Our AGM is generally attended by 60-70 individuals and the awards banquet evening hosts more than 100 H&S members, who gather to celebrate the accomplishments of dedicated H&S volunteers and educators in the English public school system. And this was our intention again this year... and then COVID-19 arrived.

The QFHSA, like so many other organizations, opted to postpone our AGM until August and rearrange things to hold it online.



Attendees of our 2020 Annual General Meeting

The AGM that had been scheduled for May 2, 2020, was postponed to August 22, 2020, and was held via the Zoom platform due to restrictions on public gatherings in force at the time. The program was a very simple one that covered the basics that needed to be addressed: adoption of an agenda, approval of the minutes of the May 4, 2019 AGM, acceptance of the financial statements, the proposal of a budget for 2021, the election of new members of the QFHSA board of directors, and the appointment of the auditor for 2021. We had decided to revise the format to include only 1 representative from each association instead of the usual 1 rep per 75 members ratio we usually have. We felt that a Zoom that included 60-70 people would not be conducive

to dialogue and that a more intimate group would be more successful. A total of 36 individuals participated, representing 23 Home and School associations. Also in attendance were four observers, eight QFHSA directors, and four staff members. A video recording was made of the AGM and a transcript of the text in the chat line is now part of the QFHSA archives.

The QFHSA elected two new directors: Natasha Drysdale and Meaghan Dufour from Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary in Gatineau (WQSB). Michael Nalecz stepped down from the board after finishing his term and was thanked for his dedicated service to the Federation.

There were no resolutions submitted and caucused with the delegates this time around. (A 5-hour event would not have worked so well on Zoom as it does in person, with coffee, cookies and a buffet lunch included.) Instead, a presidents' meeting was held after the business session to discuss the current education climate and the role of H&S parents in the system. The QFHSA shared advice about the possible limits of participation and fundraising imposed on H&S associations in the fall. It was suggested that the QFHSA consider extending the current membership year to mid November 2020, a move that would give H&S associations the opportunity to organize membership campaigns later in the fall.

In an evaluation survey distributed after the event, 76% of delegates said they were satisfied with the quality of the AGM and, under the circumstances, appreciated its brevity. In addition, 100% of respondents said they appreciated the discussion period afterward and felt they had received valuable information and reassurances for the road ahead.

Although we missed the camaraderie of getting together in person and sharing the H&S spirit, we look forward to next year when, hopefully, we will be able to connect with everyone in a meaningful way, even if, again, it cannot be in person. The annual book of reports, usually distributed by email to the delegates, is being posted to the website, for all H&S members to reference.

Carol Meindl, *Executive Director*

News for You

Air Quality in Classrooms: *An On-Going Concern for Decades*

COVID-19 HAS SHONE A SPOTLIGHT on many neglected areas of our society: the state of our seniors' residences, the low wages for essential hospital support staff, the fragility of distribution networks, and, now that school has started again, **the situation of proper air circulation and sanitation in our poorly-maintained school buildings.**

Concerns about maintenance of our schools and their air quality in particular are not new for Home and School parents. Back in 1994, the QFHSA adopted a resolution on *School Hygiene*. At that time, the Federation called on local associations and local school councils to inquire of their school administration, local commissioners, and school boards about the allocation and dispersal of funds per student for building maintenance (i.e., the provision of soap and towels). That was pretty basic stuff to be calling for back then and yet, how current.

In 2001, H&S members attending the QFHSA Annual General Meeting adopted a resolution on *School Maintenance* urging the Ministry of Education to set standards for school cleanliness as a lack of sanitation in school surroundings could contribute to an increase in gastrointestinal illnesses, asthmatic reactions, and urinary tract infections, not to mention affect academic performance. H&S members felt schools should model safe and hygienic practices and urged the Ministry of Education to increase the allotment for school maintenance in order to facilitate healthier school environments. In 2010, your Federation was still calling for more attention to the

problem of school environments. So much is interlinked. Research suggested that children attending schools in good condition scored 5 to 10% higher on standardized tests than students who attended schools in poor condition. Healthy new and existing schools with cleaner air and reduced exposure to such toxic substances as asbestos and mould create



Photo by Max Fischer from Pexels

healthier and safer learning environments for children, and contribute to improved academic achievement and enhanced well-being.

The Federation urged the Quebec government to immediately increase the budget allocated to the infrastructure and building maintenance of our schools to make them toxin free. Further, the QFHSA communicated its belief that these monies should be considered separate from other building improvement budgets allocated for windows, roofs, and other repairs necessary due to exposure or age.

Federal and provincial governments had demonstrated interest in this important issue in 2015 by developing programs like the *Tools for School IAQ Action Kits*. However, Canada did not launch a centralized effort to implement these kits at that time as

both health and education remained provincial jurisdictions. The organization **Canadians for a Safe Learning Environment** included the Action Kit checklists in its *Information and Archive* section on its website. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had real success implementing the actions through the efforts of the Lung Association.

And here we are in 2020, in the middle of a global pandemic, sending our children back to classrooms in schools that are still very much in need of major infrastructure repair. Even more importantly, they are in need of good clean air circulation. How often have school air ducts been cleaned in the past 30 years? Are all classrooms fitted with windows that can open to let in fresh air? Will there be sufficient custodial staff in each school to keep up with the new demand for a cleaner environment for our children?







If successive governments had been truly concerned with student success, they would have listened to the science and allocated sufficient budgets long ago to improve the learning environments of our students, increasing opportunity for all, instead of investing time and money in trying to dismantle school boards and limiting access to English-language services. Now the call for upgrading school buildings is even more paramount for the future health of our children. Let's hope this time the government will act.

Carol Meindl,
Executive Director

Celebrating Our Volunteers

The QFHSA Unsung Heroes of 2019-2020

This award recognizes Home & School and/or school volunteers who have proven to be helpful, reliable, available, and courteous, who honour their commitments throughout the school year, are willing to take on additional responsibilities when the need arises, and are involved in everyday school life. Their dedication merits recognition locally and provincially.

	Beacon Hill	Christine Barnes, Stephanie Gartner, Julia Genoni, Bita Guzman, Iliana Mariona, Kathleen Spaw	
	Children's World Academy	Betty Chong, Nicky Giulietti, Francesca Gravano, Tara Longtin, Walter Tom	
	Edgewater	Tara Cheevers	
	Edinburgh	Julian Hung, Sow Fun Lee, Nadia Vani	
	Evergreen	Jo-anna Bevan, Chelsea Castagna, Nellie Dionne, Chris Doiron, Melanie Doutre, Jennifer Gilligan, Sonia Lamoureux, Lynn MacDowell, Sarah Simunic, Athena Soupliotis, Melanie Tessier, Sarah Tomassone	
	Gardenview	Julia Arui, Shirley Benoudiz, Joanne Catalano, Nathalie Cheron, Alexia Kontolemos, Laura Piro, Veny Todaro	
	Lindsay Place	Nancy Tellier, Oksana Yakimiy	
	St. Patrick	Marie Cirelli, Fanny Cr�vier, Stephanie Davidson, Tracy Element, Mary-Kate Jackson Yule, Rebecka Lang, Donnalynn Rainey, Pam Robinson, Natalie Souza, Jael Symes, Tracy Witzke	
	South Hull	Cathy Poch	
	Westwood	Holly Bombardier, Carole Seto	

Celebrating Our Volunteers

The QFHSA Golden Torch Award Recipients 2019-2020

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.



Beacon Hill	Emmanuelle Dagenais, Pauline Fakhri-Deep, Catherine Fini , Melissa Lim, Neil Linsdell
École Primaire Beaconsfield	Christina Chough, Julie Mergl, Nancy Newman
Children's World Academy	Laura D'Adamo, Nathalie Tremblay
Edgewater	Jodie Roberts
Edinburgh	Siobhan Babkine, Julia Edwards
Evergreen	Susan Nowak, Melinda Paradis
John Rennie	Claudia Bino
St. Patrick	Andrea Cappelli, Mimi Tabaczuk
South Hull	Chloe O'Shaughnessy
Westwood	Joanne Crocco, Lynn Fitzpatrick



Your Nominations Please: QFHSA Volunteer of the Year

We are continuing to accept nominations for the 2020 QFHSA Volunteer of the Year Award—and we would love to hear all about your choice! Please send us a couple of paragraphs making your case for your “shining star.” All nominees should be acknowledged by their local association, whether or not they are chosen as the QFHSA H&S Volunteer of the Year for 2020. Please submit your nomination to info@qfhsa.org by December 15th, 2020.

A casualty of our pandemic year was the awarding of the other major QFHSA awards for the 2019-2020. With so much disruption to our lives and so many new demands on our time, it was not feasible to expect the QFHSA community to dedicate time to this task as well. We look forward to launching calls for nominations for the 2020-2021 awards later in the school year.

Celebrating Our Volunteers

2019-2020 QFHSA Membership Awards

Congratulations to the membership chairs and executive members of the following Home and School Associations whose membership numbers increased substantially from the 2018-2019 school year.



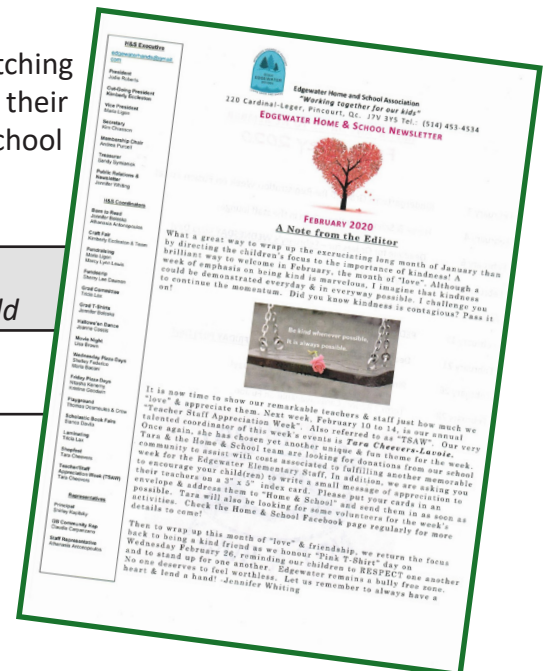
Arundel Elementary – SWLSB
Eardley Elementary – WQSB
Forest Hill Jr. Elementary – LBPSB
Nesbitt Elementary – EMSB
Wakefield Elementary – WQSB



2019-2020 QFHSA Newsletter Awards

Kudos to these editors for their eye-catching and informative newsletters that keep their parents up to date on Home and School activities.

Kinga Breining,
St. Patrick's Elementary's *Pot of Gold*
Jennifer Whiting,
Edgewater Elementary



News for You

Does Community Activism Make Quebec Anglophones Happier?

DOES BEING DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES in Quebec community groups contribute to individual happiness? This was the question posed by Dr. Pierre Olivier Bonin as part of his doctoral dissertation. His findings were discussed at QUESCEN's Zoom Lunch and Learn session on September 3rd.



Photo by Dani Hart from Pexels

Instinctively, we might think that of course it does. One is always happier when one is involved in one's community, so long as that involvement does not become unnecessarily stressful. Dr. Bonin distinguished between those engaged in high-risk activism versus those involved in more conventional activities. High-risk activism might involve climbing a bridge to protest or marching against police. Conventional activism falls more along the lines of serving on boards, volunteering, signing petitions, subscribing to a newsletter, making charitable donations to support a cause, etc. He used **happiness** as the **dependent variable** and participation as the **independent variable**.

Overall, his survey showed 68.72% of respondents indicated they were *rather happy* with their life in Quebec; 25% indicated they were *happy*; and only 6.28% indicated that they were *rather unhappy*. No one indicated that they were *unhappy*.

Dr. Bonin did pose that activists may be happier by nature than their rank and file fellow citizens, thus the higher level of happiness amongst activists. But is it causal or coincidental? Do happy people become activists or do

activists become happy people? Moreover, his study did not distinguish between those who were involved in activism through their paid work or through their personal volunteer time. It seems it would be the best of both worlds to be paid to participate actively in one's community and, in addition, to serve voluntarily, doubling the pleasure.

If activism contributes so greatly to the quality of one's life, Dr. Bonin asked if there is a role government can play in maintaining and/or increasing opportunities for citizens to get active. Certainly, increased financial support for organizations and programs that give opportunities to individuals to volunteer and develop their sense of personal happiness would be a start. Perhaps governments could offer tax credits to individuals for community involvement, in the same way some schools give credit to students for hours of community service.

Interestingly, his study also showed that suburban residents were less happy than their rural counterparts. However, the study did not indicate if there is a difference between the amount or quality of involvement that manifests itself in both populations.

Some participants in the Lunch and Learn session asked if satisfaction is dependent on results. Can one still be happy with one's participation even if one's cause is not successful? Undoubtedly, there can be disappointment and a temptation to feel like time and energy may have been wasted. It is also true that when one has dedicated that time and energy, it lessens the possibility of lying in bed at night regretting having never gotten involved in the first place.

For other participants, the whole term *activist* seemed to carry some negative connotations. "Activists" are often viewed as leaders, more radical and more involved in high risk activities, the sorts of activities that might actually jeopardize their job, safety, or social standing. "Volunteers," on the other hand, are viewed more as supporters and are more involved with the more conventional activities mentioned previously. And yet,

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News for You

Community Activism

Continued from page 20

all were hard pressed to come up with a better term to indicate individuals who are active in their community other than “activists.”

One might not necessarily consider involvement in Home and School as activism. Yet when the organization, as a collective, rallies behind causes like *No to Law 21* and *Opposition to Bill 40*, Home and School does indeed engage in activism. Certainly the QFHSA has had a long history of activism under that definition. Further, when parents rally for better conditions in their schools that will benefit all students, they are engaging in activism as well.

For the vast majority of Home and School supporters, however, involvement at the local level in the daily life of their neighbourhood school is extremely satisfying and most can look back on those years with great satisfaction

and, yes, with a certain degree of happiness.

Even the term *happy* can be considered inappropriate to describe the way one feels when engaging regularly in community activism. Perhaps most respondents to the survey chose *rather happy* to describe how they felt because to declare oneself *happy* is to use a term that may be considered a little too “bright” for the occasion. Perhaps the words *contented*, *at peace*, or *satisfied* might have been better choices.

So, can being directly involved in the activities of Quebec community groups, such as Home and School, contribute to individual well-being and happiness (contentedness, peacefulness, and/or satisfaction)? Dr. Bonin’s data seems to indicate as much. Considering Home and School has been around for 100 years in Quebec, I think we could assume so, too!

Carol Meindl, *Executive Director*

Receive up to
\$1000
for your Science
Activity!

The QFHSA’s Youth Exploring Science Program: *A Great Opportunity for Science Teachers and their Students to Experiment, Explore, and Create!*



Photo by RF...studio from Pexels

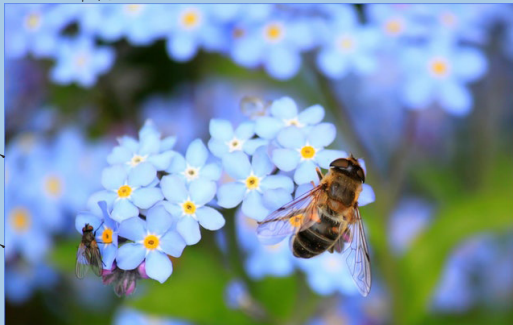


Photo by Pixabay from Pexels

Calling all primary and secondary school science teachers! The QFHSA would like to provide financial support for your science activity. Elementary and high-school science teachers (especially those working in the regions) are invited to propose a science activity they would like to conduct with their students in the 2020-2021 school year.

The chosen proposals will receive up to \$1000 in equipment/materials with which to conduct the experiment/activity. The possibilities are endless! Last year’s budding scientists built rockets, learned about bugs, and explored physics concepts using K’Nex equipment. The program is a wonderful opportunity to encourage an interest in all things science!

Find out more about our Youth Exploring Science program and how to apply for a grant on our website: <https://bit.ly/3123ylo>

For Parents: News and Information

Returning to School in Fall 2020:

Tips for Parents of Teens (and Pre-Teens) from Karen Delage, Family Life Educator

ON AUGUST 26TH, THE QFHSA CO-HOSTED a very popular free parenting webinar alongside LEARN Quebec. The topic, *Returning to School Post COVID—How Parents of Teens (and Pre-Teens) Can Help Their Children Feel Safe and Self-Assured*, was definitely foremost on parents' minds with back-to-school only days away. Both sessions of the workshop filled beyond capacity.

Family Life Educator Karen Delage explored the following questions:

- What do our children need to feel more safe and self-assured?
- What are the key components of emotional intelligence and how can we use them effectively?
- What strategies can we use to feel more prepared for the return to school in these unprecedented times?

Although the webinar focussed on pre-teens and teens, parents with younger or older children found the information relevant.

How Do You Support Your Child's Return to School This Fall?

Karen reminded us to make sure our children feel safe, cared for, and loved. It is important to recognize just how huge a role we parents play in our children's lives. What we say and what we do matter. Here are some tips:

- **Take the time to talk with your children**, listen to their concerns, and share your thoughts and knowledge. Try to foster an atmosphere of support and mutual respect.
- **Involve your children in discussions** about how the family will manage the COVID crisis and the safety rules and measures it will implement. You want your children to understand why there are rules and why they should be followed. That way, they are better equipped to handle the questions and challenges they may get from peers.
- Once the school year is underway, **check in with your children every few days** to see how they are managing with the new routines.

- **Be careful about the messages you send your children.** Some conversations are best had between adults. Including your children in heated discussions about the government's back-to-school plan and/or your school's implementation of the plan will increase their anxiety. Remember that as parents, our primary focus is our children and their physical and emotional well-being.
- **Create consistent, predictable routines for your family.** As Karen explained, everyone (teens included) thrives on routines. Building a solid baseline of routines and habits in your family life strengthen your children's sense of safety.



Brynn's First Day of Grade 8

- **Focus on strengths and victories.** Help your child focus on the positive, on what they are doing right. Get your children to ask themselves the questions, "What is right with me? What is going well right now?" If you feel you or your child is getting preoccupied by worry, make a conscious effort to limit worry time.

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For Parents: News and Information

Using Our Emotional Intelligence

The next part of the presentation focussed on emotional intelligence, a term coined by Psychologist Daniel Goleman in his hugely successful book of the same name. Emotional intelligence is our ability to understand and manage our emotions effectively—both within ourselves and in our interactions. The five key components of emotional intelligence are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy (understanding)
- Social skills

These skills can be strengthened by practice, intention, and consistent use. Karen believes that the COVID-19 pandemic has created a perfect opportunity to strengthen our emotional intelligence.

Karen stressed the importance of communicating our emotions, and it is important to encourage our children to do the same. In her work with teens, Karen has observed many who self-shame, who keep their anxiety and confusion bottled up. Our children need to know that their home is a safe space to share how they are feeling and what they are dealing with.

How do you have that dialogue with your teens about their emotions? Here are Karen's tips:

- Start the conversation with general questions like: "What are you hearing?" Or try using starter questions like, "What are you feeling?" and "Could it be that you are feeling..."
- Speak from the "I" and give examples, "I feel that you're having a hard time with ..."
- Make reference to TV shows, current events, and topics that your teen might want to share on.
- Make sure your children know you are available, and ready to listen.
- Find the right words to pinpoint how your child is feeling and figure out what is going on. Karen suggests using "The Feeling Wheel" developed by Gloria Willcox of the Gottman Institute to really name what is going on. This tool can be found at <https://bit.ly/36ELKGO>.

- Avoid making false reassurances like, "Everything is going to be alright." This can shut down the discussion and make your teen feel that he/she can't talk about the problem.
- If the conversation becomes too heated to handle, it is perfectly fine to halt it and take it up again when you feel more calm.
- Remember that it is okay to tell your child you do not know what to say, that you do not have all the answers. Let your child know that you are trying your best—and that you both can work together to figure things out.



First Day for Dakota (Grade 9) and Savanna (Grade 7)

Karen's presentation was filled with great suggestions for helping our children thrive during challenging times. We also learned that parents need to remember to take care of themselves. This may involve carving out some "me time" each day to relax and recharge. Karen suggested the website [positivepsychology.com](https://www.positivepsychology.com) as a great place to find inspiring talks. Karen also shared these words, "I forgive myself for being human and making mistakes." We can all use some self-compassion (and self-forgiveness) these days!

Karen Henchey, *Communications Officer*

Family Life Educator Karen Delage's workshops are designed to build strong, harmonious relations between parents and their children. She offers parenting workshops and webinars as well as one-on-one counselling for parents of tweens and teens. For more information, email parenteenfocus@gmail.com.

Membership Services -- *The Latest News*

A Few Words from Membership Services

DURING THE ZOOM AND PHONE MEETINGS last spring and again in September, it was heartening to see that Home and Schools were and are willing to step up to the plate and contribute to school life in any way they can. During the spring and summer months, Home and School executive members put a lot of effort into the refund and credit note process and the QFHSA thanks them for dedicating the extra time needed to complete these tasks and be accountable to their members.



Gabriel's First Day of Grade 4

Membership Extension: Recognizing that organizing traditional membership campaigns was not possible this fall, the QFHSA recommended that last year's members (still at the school) have their membership privileges extended to November 15th to guarantee quorum at Home and School meetings. Membership chairs are encouraged to accept 2020-2021 membership forms anyway so that new parents will be able to vote at upcoming meetings. Membership lists and membership fees can be sent to the QFHSA office in batches.

2020-2021 Documents: Document submission has not been deferred. The following are due:

- 2020-2021 Executive List
- 2020-2021 Local Association Renewal Form (if signatures are obtainable)
- \$50.00 Administration Fee (cheque or e-transfer)
- 2019-2020 President Activity Report
- 2019-2020 Treasurer Report



Amelia's First Day of Grade 3

The forms are on the QFHSA website here: <https://bit.ly/34lR4gY>. If you need sample reports, please email Marlyn.

Going Online: The QFHSA Zoom account is available for Home and School use, but given the demand and the QFHSA Fall Conference in November, your preferred meeting date may not be available. Please research using a Home and School Zoom/Meet/Team or other platform for your meetings.

Office Hours: Office hours are limited as the QFHSA staff respects distancing measures, but emails are checked regularly. Emails for the staff are listed below.

Staff Emails:

Marlyn, Membership Services:
marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org

Carol, Executive Director/Zoom Reservations:
carolmeindl@qfhsa.org

Mimi, Accounting/Fall Conference Registration:
info@qfhsa.org

The past 6 months have presented challenges for everyone and I hope that traditional Home and School operations and activities return soon!

Marlyn, *Membership Services Coordinator*

Focus on the Locals

In the **Focus on the Locals** section, we share the news and information of our schools. We would love to hear from your school too! Before sending photos, please make sure you have the permission of those appearing in the photos. We invite H&S members to send in your news to news@qfhsa.org.

At St. Charles School: Together We Can Achieve!

Although things at St. Charles are a little different this year due to the pandemic, that has not stopped us from working hard to come up with creative and safe ways to fundraise for our school. We will continue to hold a fall fundraiser, and will continue with our ongoing *FlipGive* and *Oliver's Labels* campaigns. One thing that has not changed is that we will still be having our very popular *Big Bang Fundraiser*. Whereas we would usually hold this popular event in conjunction with our Welcome Back BBQ, this year it will be held virtually a little later in the school

year. We will continue to show our school spirit by holding our *Fall Clothing Sale*. We also want to ensure our graduating students have

a memorable year, so our grad committee has already met virtually a few times and has brainstormed many ideas for our students.

On September 22nd, St. Charles H&S organized a COVID-friendly school picture day. The students had fun taking their pictures outside. There were no group photos; instead, a digital "mini mosaic" will be created using the students' individual pictures.



A huge THANK YOU goes out to our administrators and teachers who are working hard to enrich the school life of the students while keeping them safe.

BCHS H&S

"Welcome Back to School" Lunch



Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the H&S of Baie-Comeau High School organized a "Welcome Back to School" lunch on Friday, September 11. Students and staff were treated to a corn boil, barbecued hot dogs, homemade chili, fruit juices, and a dessert. The annual lunch usually welcomes parents, families, and friends of BCHS. However, this year, only staff and students were in attendance. Students from each class (or bubble) took their turn in line to receive their food. Members of the H&S ensured that face coverings and other health and safety guidelines were respected. Thank you to our volunteers of the H&S who helped out in the preparation, cooking and clean-up.



Focus on the Locals

Back to School Fun at Willingdon

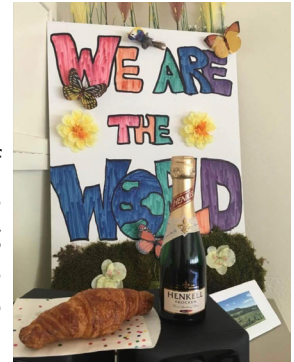
Willingdon Home & School was fortunate to be able to participate in the outdoor welcome activity organized for the new Kindergarten students. Home & School prepared individually-packaged treat bags, complete with a small craft for students to do at home with their families and a nutritious snack. The activity was well attended (with masks and social distancing of course) and really helped to welcome the new students and parents into the school community.



Home & School donated several bike racks for both our senior and junior campuses. The bike racks were installed in the spring and have been well used since the beginning of school!



After an intense and successful first week back at school, Willingdon Home & School treated the teachers and staff to a small token of thanks and appreciation, offering individually wrapped pastries and a bottle of bubbly on the Friday of their first week back.



Lab-École: Re-Imagining Schools of the Future at Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary in Gatineau

Lab-École is an innovation and creative “laboratory” that aims to rethink the design of Quebec schools to make them true learning and living environments. Founding members of the Lab-École concept, Ricardo Lavallée (chef), Pierre Lavoie (fitness) and Pierre Thibeault (architect), have advocated the need to build “schools of the future” that incorporate a holistic, concerted and multidisciplinary approach as their three cornerstones (Physical Environment, Healthy and Active Lifestyles, and Nutrition).

The goal is to rethink school architecture in order to create a vibrant and collaborative environment that is as attractive as it is comfortable, while being adaptable and evolutionary in the context of the changing needs of children, families, and communities at large.

Given that several new professions will emerge between now and 2030, the need for more collaborative (indoor and outdoor) spaces and practices in schools will continue to evolve. The Lab-École team presented the challenge to six schools in Quebec: What would the ideal 21st century school look like?



A brand new communal space for our school by DMA Architectes

Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School (WQSB) in Gatineau, Quebec, was the only English school in the province selected. The school’s innovative and progressive approach as a community-based, child-centred institution aligned perfectly with the Lab-École School of the Future movement.

David McFall, Principal

Focus on the Locals



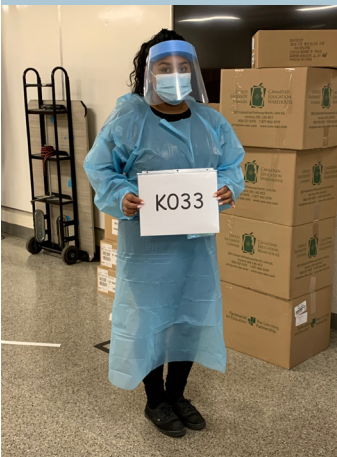
Picture Day at Edinburgh Elementary School!

In keeping with the times, Edinburgh held Picture Day outside, observing all the social distancing measures.

Many children even under the age of 10 wore masks before and after their school pictures, as did all Grade 5 and 6 students as well as all of the adults! The event was organized by the Home and School Association.

New School Year, New Challenges at Children's World Academy

At Children's World Academy, the school year has begun as it does each fall, only this year, it comes with new challenges. As we navigate the pandemic, we are all learning to adapt. In school, that means added precautions with children regularly disinfecting or washing hands, social distancing, following arrows, and wearing masks. They wear their masks on school buses, in the hallways and, in some cases, even in class. These precautions have been adopted by the teachers and staff too, who wear masks and visors throughout the school day. At the kindergarten level, the teachers and aids/assistants are even wearing protective clothing.



As we all know, children are resilient, adapting and going on with their day. Many kids say that it is just the new norm to sanitize hands or wear a face mask. Most are happy to be back at school, surrounded by their friends, as the school day continues with only a few changes.

As the kids get back into their routines, there are some voids as well. The most obvious is the absence



of volunteers in the school. Under normal circumstances, numerous volunteers give of their time to help the school run smoothly. However, they are no longer present to help with library, lunch distribution, sorting of the lost and found, and so much more.

This new normal brings new challenges, but as we follow the changing rules put forward by the Health Ministry, we will learn to adapt. The year ahead will certainly be different, but we will rise to the challenge. We will take it on one day at a time and learn to make the best of it.

This new reality has impacted our H&S committee as well. Most notably, our meetings are now being held on Zoom. Although we may not be able to be together in person, we are as committed, and possibly even more committed than ever, to find new ways of giving back to our school. We are remaining open-minded and exploring creative ways to fundraise this year. We are being good communicators, listening and collaborating together. We are reflecting on what is happening in the world due to this pandemic and wearing our resourceful thinking caps. We have been fortunate in welcoming many new members to our community this year along with our returning parents. We are grateful for this and we are looking forward to moving ahead with new ideas and insight. Wishing everyone a safe and healthy school year!

SHARE YOUR NEWS!



Photo by Anissa Thompson from FreeImages

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 *QFHSA News*. Send submissions to news@qfhsa.org.



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