

# CENTENNIAL CLC YEAR 3 EVALUATION: Taggin' Our Success!



Cindy Elston, CLC Coordinator, Kit Malo, consultation support

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# Introduction

## CENTENNIAL & ITS CONTEXT

- *Greenfield Park is one of the only "Bilingual Status" towns left in Canada*
- *Centennial Regional High School opened in 1972*
- *Greenfield Park recently celebrated our centennial year!*
- *There are 855 families and 1055 students who make up the Centennial community*
- *52.1% of our families speak both English and French (Provincial bilingualism rate: 40.6%)*
- *The English Speaking population of Greenfield Park has grown 1.26 x from 1996 - 2006.*
- *38.8% of our English population immigrated to Canada from another country*
- *25.2% of the English speaking population have attained a university degree*
- *The proportion of English speakers who have not graduated from high school is lower than the French-speaking majority (Longueuil Census Division)*
- *41.8% of the English-speaking community in Greenfield Park have a family income of under \$20,000 per annum*



## Introduction

Welcome to Centennial's Community Learning Centre (CLC) Year 3 evaluation report! In these pages you will find highlights of an evaluation carried out between January-May of 2014. We looked at outcomes of key programs and how they relate to achieving our overall mission and mandate. We designed questions using our Theory of Change (ToC), which has six result areas including the two we focused on this year, Student Success and Community Engagement.

Evaluation is a cycle of inquiry that starts with a curiosity about our environment. It is developed through establishing key indicators of what should or could happen. It is then tested by discovering what is really going on by asking those implicated

about their experience. Finally, we make recommendations and changes based on what we have uncovered.

Evaluation is a process concerned with learning from our context about how to engage with it better. As a CLC, this is an important activity for a number of reasons. Ongoing evaluation offers us:

- *A way to stay connected to and further develop relationships with teachers, parents and our school board*
- *An outreach tool to use to stay connected with partners & community organizations*
- *A promotional vehicle, offering us a chance to remind people in the school & community who we are and what we do*
- *A way to measure what impact our programs have to make mindful changes moving forward*



# Who we are - Centennial CLC at a Glance

## CLC Finances at a Glance:

This year our in-kind financial contributions have skyrocketed, from \$49,700 in 2012-2013 to \$216,000 in 2013-2014!!  
*(see Appendix B for a breakdown in all areas)*

## OUR VISION & MISSION

Centennial Regional Community Learning Centre (also referred to here as CRHS CLC) creates an opportunity for students, families, and the English Speaking Community at large to engage in collaborative activities and projects that enrich the lives of everyone! It is a place where everyone feels welcome, safe and inspired to achieve their full potential, and where community as a whole grows together.

The CRHS CLC's mission is to support the well being of our students, families and the community at large, while continually acting as a catalyst for sustainable community development and vitality.

## IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK: THE STORY OF CENTENNIAL CLC

CRHS CLC programs are open to everyone from the very young to the young at heart! We create opportunities for students to: increase life skills, gain valuable real-life experience, finish high school and broaden their horizons. Community members involved in our programming continue lifelong learning, break isolation and preserve their English-speaking identit(ies) through relationship development and

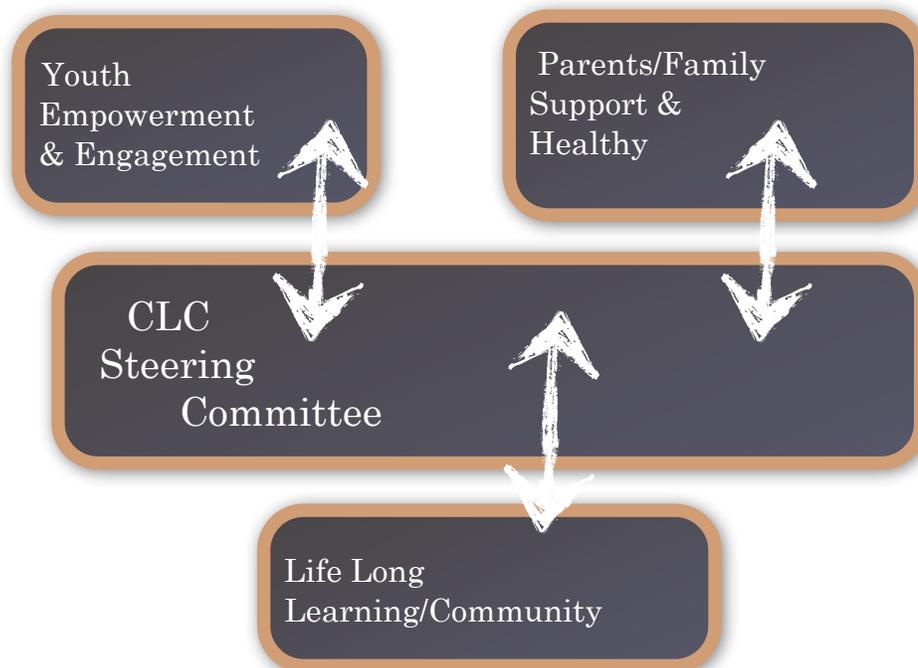
intergenerational sharing.

There are 22 secondary-level CLC schools that offer programming in Québec. Our CLC is housed within Centennial Regional High School in Greenfield Park. With a total student population of 1055 and over 100 staff, we cater to the largest school population of all the CLCs. We are also the most ethnically diverse with students representing over 62 different cultures and religions.

Greenfield Park is one of the only “*Bilingual Status*” towns left in Canada. When our community risked losing this status in 2013, Francophones and Anglophones rallied together in response. Residents feel pride in their heritage, tradition and community and stand together to ensure these values continue.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Due to an increase in active partnerships this year (from 12 to 20!), we chose to divide our CLC partner table into four subcommittees. Our goal was to ensure that participants got opportunities to focus on issues that fit their interests and skill-sets (*for a full list of partner committees and members, see Appendix A*). We also maintain a steering committee that handles logistics and the governance of our overall mission, mandate and ToC.



## CENTENNIAL'S THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change (ToC) is a planning framework that describes the *why* and *how* of an initiative designed to accomplish positive change based on community need.

In the CRHS CLC ToC we have 6 areas of focus, 5 of which align with the Riverside School board and Centennial Regional High School Management and Educational Success Agreements (MESA).

For our Year 3 evaluation, we chose to focus on the two areas that speak to levels of **success and engagement** in our community:

- 1. Increase success of students under the age of 20 (as measured by student, teacher and parent engagement); and,*
- 2. Increase the number of citizens from surrounding communities who participate in the CLC (Community engagement)*

### THEORY OF CHANGE

*Theory of Change' (ToC) is a planning method that describes 'Why' and 'How' an initiative will accomplish the change that is envisioned in your community*



# Student Success & Engagement

Student Success & Engagement

From our perspective, student success and engagement is more than having high levels attendance at an activity. The importance of *active* and *present* participation cannot be overstated. As Douglas Williams has said, “*Engagement and learning go hand-in-hand*” (TTFM, 2011).



The CRHS CLC takes its definition of student engagement from the *Tell Them From Me* literature. We consider it in 3 distinct subcategories:

- i) *Social engagement (a sense of belonging at school, participation in sports and clubs, the ability to make positive friendships)*
- ii) *Institutional engagement (valuing schooling outcomes, school attendance, positive homework behaviours, positive school behavior)*
- iii) *Intellectual engagement – interest and motivation, effort and being appropriately challenged in class*

## STORYTELLING: METHODS AND GATHERING

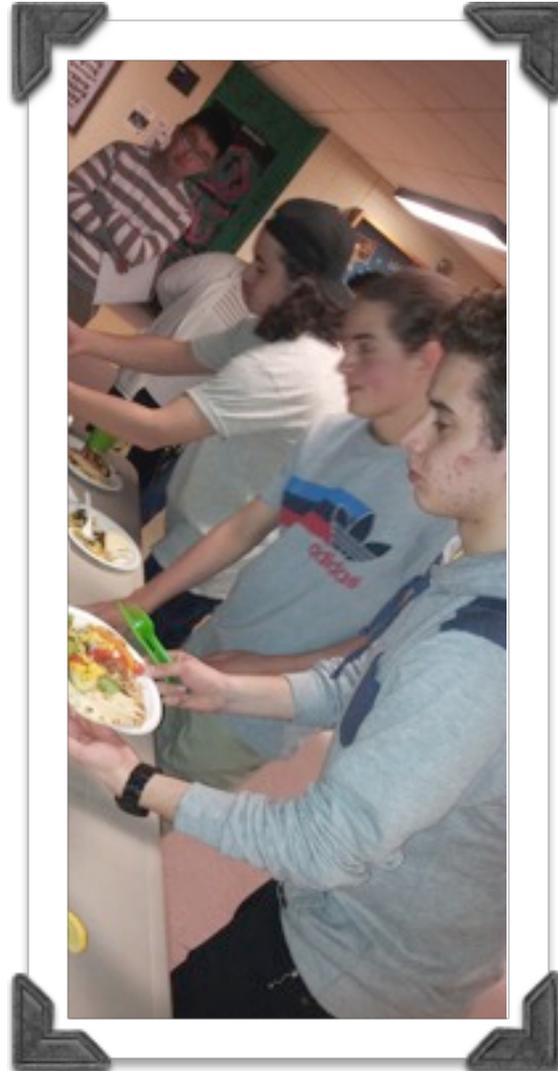
We chose to evaluate our ToC Result Area of student success/engagement using five different data sets including:

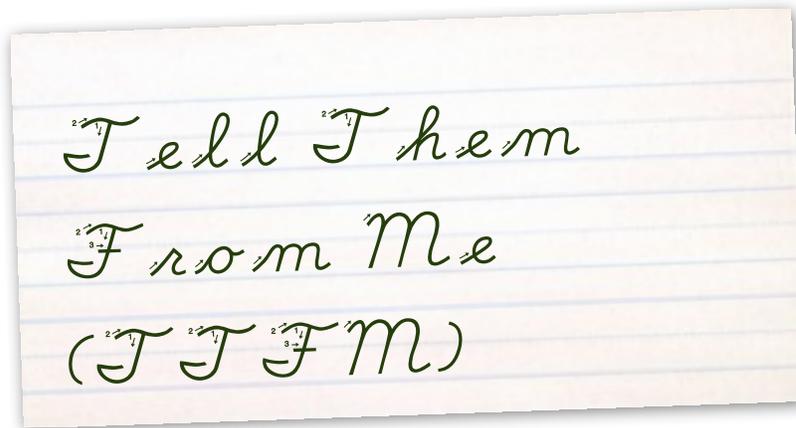
1. *Tell Them From Me* survey data (TTFM) with a focus on questions pertaining to student engagement. In 2013, 217 students completed the TTFM survey (20.5% response rate)
2. *Survey results* from 3 out of 7 POP class programs (48 students filled these surveys out in-class)
3. *Online surveys* parents filled out about their students and the CLC programs (Q'ANGLO survey, 299 responses!)
5. An online survey sent to 119 teachers (32 responses, 27% response rate)

We were looking to see *in what ways* and *to what extent* do our activities contribute to:

- *Student engagement & success (long-term outcome of students are strongly engaged in school life)*
- *Teacher engagement*
- *Parent engagement (long-term outcome of Parents supporting their children's involvement in school)*

What follows is a close-up look at each data set, our analysis and recommendations.





The TTFM survey is, in its own words, “An evaluation that includes a web-based student survey and optional parent and teacher surveys. It provides leading indicators of student engagement and wellness.” A unique feature of the TTFM model is that it offers schools a direct link to the student experience through student voices.

At the end of 2013, 217 Centennial students (20.5% of the Centennial population) filled out this survey. The CLC analyzed results pertaining to student engagement (in all three areas) to hone in on how specific elements of our programs might need adjusting. What follows is a general overview of key issues the TTFM highlighted as imperative for student success. We refer to these results throughout this report.

## **TTFM AND ENGAGEMENT**

Student engagement has dramatically decreased at Centennial over the last several years. This is reflected in TTFM report statistics - while school completion for Centennial is average (79% as opposed to 78% across Canada), engagement is quite low. Only 18% of Centennial students were defined as “engaged” (93% completion rate) by the TTFM survey results (the national average is about 32%). Disengaged students (average probability of school completion is at 79%) is 36% for Centennial and 25% for the rest of Canada. Most alarming, alienated students (with a 45% completion rate of high school) hovers at 13% of Centennial students (8% is the Canadian norm).

These numbers are further echoed in low participation rates at the school – (participation is defined here as taking part in: art, drama, music groups, school clubs or committees). At Centennial, 38% of students self-identify as participating in school programs (the Canada norm is 43%). When students in a follow-up TTFM focus group were asked about this statistic, they suggested different reasons for this drop, including: it’s no longer “cool” to be involved in school clubs or in too many school activities, there are too many choices, the internet takes up their time, no one reads the school bulletin/teachers talk over the morning announcements, they want to participate in everything and there is no consistency from students about what they want to do. Considering that the CRHS CLC’s mandate is to in part provide programming to students, we need to be aware of how they view getting involved and what we might do to attract them to our activities.

Centennial students also have lower-than-average “positive behavior at school” results with 80% indicating positive behavior (86% is Canada norm). At the same time, students are more intellectually engaged than the average *by far* – at Centennial, 62% of students are intellectually engaged as opposed to 51% Canada average, while 36% of students are “interested” and “motivated” by academics (compared to 30% of Canada norms).

## ENGAGEMENT AND GENDER

The TTFM showed an unusual pattern of engagement regarding gender at Centennial worth mentioning. When looking at student participation rates, the gender trends were opposite of what is typically seen across Canada - 34% of involved students were girls and 43% were boys (the norm is 49% and 37% respectively). This expresses a (-)15% difference between the participation rates of Centennial girls and the average for girls in the country and a (+)6% difference for boys.

When questioned about friends, 77% of girls and 76% of boys expressed a positive connection to relationships at Centennial (the norm being 82% and 70%). On the subject of belonging, 67% of girls had a high sense of belonging and 74% of boys, compared to the national averages of 71% and 72%. Regarding positive behavior, girls were at 86%, and boys, 73% (91% and 80% is the norm).

These statistics show:

- a) *There is a lower score on social and institutional engagement indicators for girls at Centennial than the national average; and,*
- b) *There is a higher score on these same indicators for Centennial boys*

Notably, there are also higher rates of anxiety and depression at Centennial than on average, with 29% of students indicating a moderate-to-high anxiety in school (+11% than the rest of Canada). Again, 34% of girls indicated a moderate-to-high anxiety (22% is the average) and 23% of boys (14% is the average). As well, 25% of students feel bouts of depression as opposed to 17% (Canada norm) of which 30% are girls (+10% of the national average) and 19% are boys (+14% norm).

These higher-than-average ratings regarding depression, anxiety and social and institutional engagement in Centennial students is a statistic the CRHS CLC takes seriously. We believe that in 2014-2015, there should be a concerted campaign focused on understanding what these numbers are trying to tell us. In particular, why are boys faring better on all levels of engagement? Why are girls in particular so far below the normal trends we are seeing across Canada?

Getting students to understand and help creatively problem solve this issue with staff and community could be a powerful program the CLC offers as part of its activities in the future. As engagement is linked to school completion and general well-being (TTFM, 2013), this is an area we do not have the option of overlooking moving forward.





## Pop Classes

### Student Success - POP Classes

Centennial's Personal Orientation Project (known as POP) is a class every student in grade 9 attends. This year, the POP teacher shaped the curriculum to emphasis

themes of community and discovery. This focus resulted in a partnership between the POP classes and the CLC, culminating in a guest lecturer series of local leaders. Invited guests spoke with students about their own personal pathways and experiences. Centre Jeunesse (CIJAD) talked about searching for jobs. Others encouraged students to discover themselves using personality instruments and visioning activities.

This initiative gave the community an opportunity to engage with students on issues that affect their lives both inside and outside of their school environment. What follows are the themes students expressed were most impactful about this experience, using the data gathered from their evaluations of the POP classes.

## PREPARATION FOR FUTURE

A key to student engagement resulting in motivation to continue school is a sense of future opportunities. After the Life Wheel POP class, 44% of the students indicated that they felt, *“more prepared for my future”* while after the Job Search/Resumé Building class, 86% of respondents said they felt, *“better equipped to secure a job,”* *“more confidence in finding work”* (72%) and *“more confident about giving a successful interview”* (84%). There was a general sense that guests presented subjects to the class in direct, impactful ways.

These responses suggest that POP classes focusing on career goals and future options give students an opportunity to imagine what their life after school will be. This promotes a momentum towards finishing school as “next steps” do not seem as distant. When we concretely imagine a vision for tomorrow, we increase our engagement in today (Senge, 1990).

What Students Have to say about CLC POP classes:

*“It showed me that my life needed reframing”*

*“It really helped me realize what career branch I want to enter”*

## EASING STUDENT ANXIETY

As mentioned above, Centennial has a higher-than-normal level of student-defined anxiety at school (TTFM, 2013). Interventions and curriculum that work toward understanding and lessening this anxiety are crucial for student success and continuation. The CLC sees the POP class workshops and other programs we run as being directly linked to these types of interventions.

During the POP workshops, 32.5% of students indicated feeling, “less anxious” after mapping out goals, while 39.5% said they were “more engaged in POP class.” When we feel a sense of control over our choices and life paths, we experience a lessened anxiety (Davis & Hayes, 2012). By offering programs that focus on understanding self and options, students get an important opportunity to begin planning their life. This drop in anxiety after workshops is a significant indicator of a potential area to further develop for student engagement and motivation.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RELEVANT PROGRAMS

In Canada, an alarming number of students are reporting a disinterest in the intellectual life of their schools – only 30% indicate feeling intellectually connected to schoolwork (TTFM, 2013). These numbers indicate the need to place greater emphasis on working with students to develop curriculum they find intellectually engaging.

Having guest speakers in POP classes is a way to increase student interest in material – when asked, 52% responded that these classes were more enjoyable when guests came in. The most relevant reasons why were: *it made material more interesting (8), more fun (6) and broke the “routine” of the daily grind (4).*

At the same time, 48% of students indicated these classes did not increase their enjoyment of POP. Reasons included, *“I don’t relate to anything” (1), “same old, same old either way” (6) and because “this wasn’t relevant to me” (3).*

These responses, and the rates of intellectual disengagement across schools show that:

*a) POP classes with guests increase student interest in subject matter, which enhances intellectual engagement; and that,*

*b) There is still further dialogue needed between teachers and students to discuss curriculum moving forward.*



# Parent Engagement

Parent engagement is a crucial element of overall student success (Patrikakou, 2008; Steinberg et.al, 1992). The Centennial CLC acknowledges this reality – one of our ToC long-term outcomes regarding student success is “*parents supporting their children’s involvement in school.*”

With this focus in mind, we were thrilled to receive 275 responses (in English) and 24 (in French) to the 2014 Q’Anglo online survey sent out to parents concerning their support and knowledge of the CLC and our programs. Centennial is home to 885 families. If each has approximately 1.5 parents, our return rate for this survey was roughly 23% for the school.

This overwhelming response indicates that parents are interested in their students’ school experience. A few days after the survey went out, four parents called the CLC coordinator to ask for more information about the CLC and how to get involved.

While this return rate shows the potential for a high level of parental engagement with the school/CLC, survey results indicate that parents have a general lack of awareness about the CLC. What follows are the major themes we pulled from their responses alongside our recommendations to increase parental understanding of and engagement with programming in the future.

## LACK OF AWARENESS

Only 47% of 299 respondents know that Centennial is a CLC school. Given this lack of awareness, it is not surprising that 79% (217) are unsure of who to contact regarding information about the CLC and its programs.

These figures suggest that parents could benefit from an increase in outreach and communication from the CLC. At the same time, other statistics suggest that parents are being connected with, at least in a general sense. When asked if parents were “informed about the school/CLC,” 57% said they “*agreed*” or “*strongly agreed*” with this statement. Due to the wording of the question it is impossible to ascertain what % of parents were describing the school, CLC or both.



Parents were equally uncertain about “what types of activities are currently offered at the school/CLC” - 41.5% of 260 respondents answered this question with “*don’t know*.” The majority of respondents could not answer whether they had seen an

increase in activities at Centennial since the CLC’s inception in 2011 (59% responded with “*don’t know*”). This suggests that many parents are not aware of CLC programs, although again the fusion of “school/CLC” in the question does not allow for conclusive inferences regarding this.

For parents that did indicate an awareness of general school/CLC activities, (58.5%) there was a diversity of responses regarding their familiarity with programs. A majority checked off choices such as “*after school programs for students*” (42%) followed by “*recreational opportunities for students*” (26%) and “*access to computers*

*and/or the internet*” (28.5%). These options were rather vague and could mean parents are aware of a multiplicity of programs that fall under these terms or simply have a general sense of school/CLC activities.

When asked to pick specific CLC programs, the level of awareness dropped further – 54% could not name any CLC programs or activities, while a further 25% responded with *“don’t know.”* Peer tutoring was the only program that received recognition, with around 10% of respondents indicating they had heard of it. This is potentially due to the nature of how it is administered, as it needs parental approval to run.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Parents responded with mixed messages regarding volunteerism at the school. When asked, 91.5% said they do not volunteer at Centennial (239 responses) with 87% adding that they have *“never volunteered.”* Yet when asked if they are *“involved in the planning and decision-making around school/CLC activities and events”* 60.5% said that they are.

These conflicting numbers piqued our curiosity. Do parents have an understanding of volunteerism different from our own? We looked at a question on the survey that breaks down specific volunteerism activities to see if we could understand how parents were defining this term - 83% said they have *“never helped”* in any area.

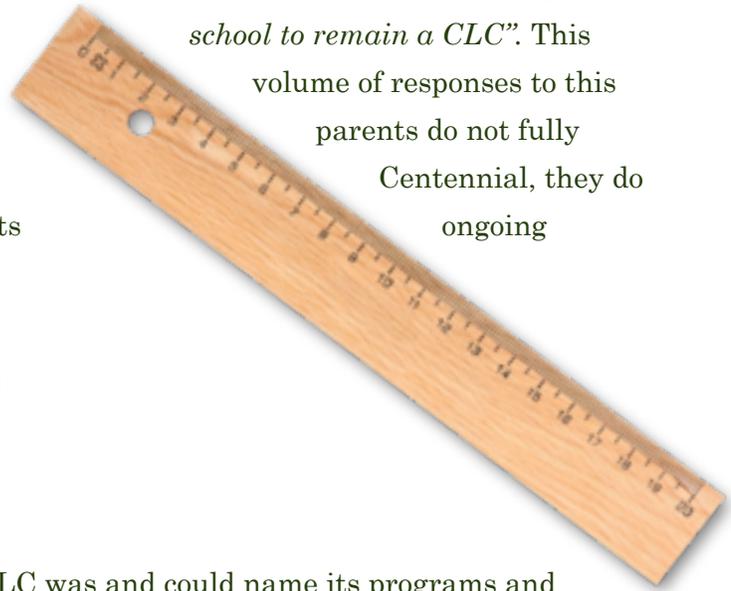
Do parents feel involved in planning but not executing activities? The majority indicated they feel welcome as volunteers (76%) and that their attendance at CLC activities has increased over the past few years (53%) yet there seems to be a lack of volunteerism at the school. To understand these inconclusive responses, more thorough evaluation in this area needs to be done.

## PARENTS’ PERSPECTIVE ON CLC IMPACT

Only 36% of parents answered the question regarding how they see the CLC impacting their students lives - 220 individuals skipped it. Out of 79 answers, top

responses were: *“child is more engaged in school work,”* (32) *“child has made new friends”* (30), and *“child has a greater sense of belonging”* (27).

Interestingly, despite this lack of awareness about what the CLC is, does and how it impacts the school, 63% of parents indicated they *“agree”* or *“strongly agree”* that it is *“important for the school to remain a CLC”*. This answer, combined with the large volume of responses to this survey, suggests that although parents do not fully understand the CLC’s role at Centennial, they do see its value and have a desire for its ongoing sustainability.



## APPRECIATION AND CONNECTION

Parents that DID know what the CLC was and could name its programs and activities were clearly grateful for its services. As one parent explained, *“The CLC has been the most comprehensive way of reaching out to parents & the community...I am grateful for the activities provided and the support given by the CLC coordinators”* Other comments suggested that the CLC is the most effective way for students to connect with community and enhance their learning.

These responses show that:

- a) *It is unclear whether the long-term outcome of parents supporting their child’s involvement in school is being met through CLC activities or otherwise;*
- b) *There is an active interest from parents about the programs and ongoing existence of the CLC; and,*
- c) *There is further communication and sensitization needed between parents and the CLC moving forward.*

*Staff  
Reflections*



Teacher engagement in school programming is another important factor that predicts student success. At Centennial, there is a culture of support and healthy expectations from teachers regarding student achievement. For example, Centennial's students rated teacher's expectations of academic success at 7.5 out of 10, which is higher than the Canadian norm of 7.1 (TTFM, 2013).

To further investigate teacher engagement, we sent all Centennial staff an online survey that asked about their knowledge of the CLC and its programs. We also invited them to describe their perception of the CLC's impact on students. Our intent was to determine how engaged teachers are/want to be in this type of programming. Furthermore, we used this evaluation opportunity as a way to do outreach and educate staff about the CLC.

Maintaining and strengthening these connections is, as it turns out, a vital element of the sustainability of the CLC moving forward. As you will read in the following analysis and recommendations of teacher responses, sensitization and education about the CLC is a timely and needed focus.

## **STAFF AWARENESS OF THE CLC**

Staff are much better informed about the CLC than parents – out of 32 responses, 98.5% know Centennial is a CLC school. They also have a pulse on how informed parents and students are – 50% said that parents and students are aware of the CLC while another 50% said they were not yet (20%) but should be (30%). Those that elaborated on their answer cited a lack of promotion and networking as key reasons why this absence of awareness exists – 5 out of 7 respondents mentioned a need for heightened communication between the CLC and parents. In particular, they noted the need for students to become better promoters of its programs (as a bridge between school and parent).

Staff showed less of an awareness of particular programs of the CLC, yet the number that do know these specifics is still high – 81.3% knew about our programs and where to find them.

## STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN CLC INITIATIVES

Currently, 46.9% of respondents are involved in CLC initiatives while another 53.1% are not. For those less involved, time management was cited as the major factor impeding their engagement in the CLC - 7 out of 11 staff indicated that a difficulty juggling their current schedules made it difficult to imagine committing to other activities.

Along the same lines, 34.4% (of 32) think it *"would be fun"* to be more involved, while



40.6% noted they are *"unsure"* and 21.9% see being involved as *"more work."*

The trend of not being implicated in ways that would take extra time or energy was echoed when staff were asked if they

were interested in becoming active decision-makers regarding the CLC's mandate – 15.6% said yes, 43.8% said no and 40.6% said maybe. Those surveyed were interested in using it for support and resources, with 61.3% seeing the CLC as a resource for support (and fundraising).

These results suggest there is a good number of staff currently involved in CLC initiatives. Answers suggest a desire to directly benefit from the resources and

support of the CLC, but not be involved with administration and mandate decisions. These results help clarify the type of engagement our staff see as worthwhile.

## STAFF PERCEIVE BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

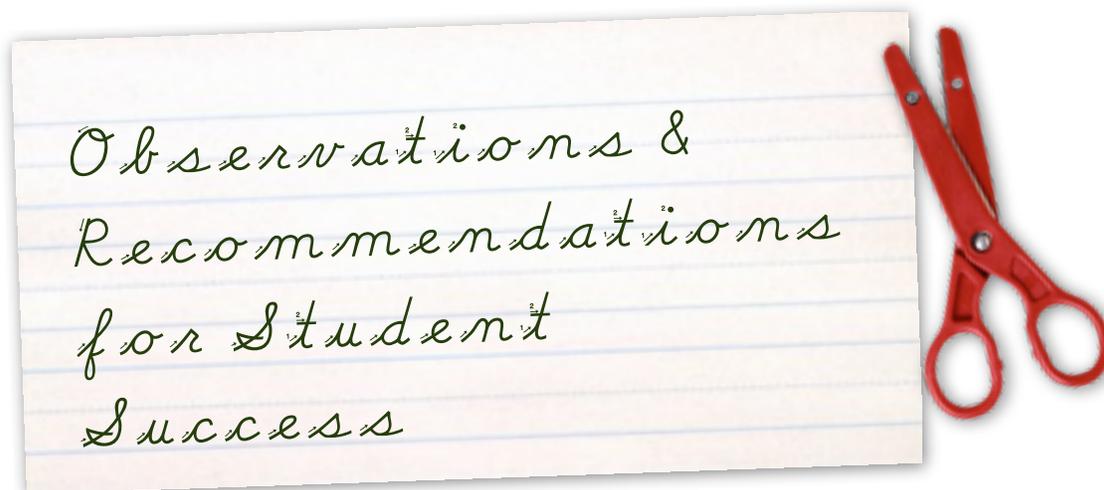
Exactly 50% of staff knew of students who had benefited or been part of CLC initiatives. Out of 11 who explained further, 4 cited *the peer-mentoring program* while others mentioned *POP classes (1) cooking classes (2) and a truth and reconciliation event (1)*.

85.7% of respondents said they feel the CLC has played a role in student engagement at Centennial, which includes *developing a sense of community, developing confidence and skills, sparking their interest in specific areas and offering courses and programs the teachers do not have the resources or time for*.

When asked about how they saw changes regarding the CLC's role in the school, 22 skipped the question. Of those that did respond, 50% said they weren't sure they could answer (need to know more about the program) and another 50% said, *"Making connections and community events happen (2)" "Increased tie in with curriculum," "Increased opportunities for people like me who want to start projects to benefit the students and can find support in the CLC," "Diversity of activities--new activities in school."*

"I'm very grateful to the CLC for supplying me with the ingredients I needed to be able to offer students healthy cooking classes after school. Without the CLC, this wouldn't have been possible. It was a tremendously fun, fulfilling and highly educational experience both for me as a teacher and for the students as well and I remain extremely grateful to Cindy Elston and the CLC for making this possible." - *Teacher*





## NEXT STEPS - OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Responses from parents, partners and teachers show there is a great deal of interest in and understanding of the importance of the CLC. There is also a request from the majority of respondents to improve outreach and communication with stakeholders about who the CLC is, does and how to get involved.

*“Je crois que le CLC doit faire encore plus de publicité pour nous tenir informer de ce que nous pouvons faire comme parent aider, apprendre et faire le partage. Je crois que vous avez beaucoup à offrir et nous n’en connaissons très peu.”*  
– Parent

Part of successfully outreaching to our constituents will be through using the right communication means for the right groups. People differ in how they want to receive information: *email* is the top means for all (79% of parents, 83.9% of teachers) followed by “*my child*” (60.3% of parents), *the school website* (33.7% parents), *newsletter* (27.3% parents) and *letter in mailbox* (22.6% of teachers). Interestingly, Francophone parents indicated more of an interest in the newsletter (41.7%) and less on the website (25%). We will need to take these diverse modes into account moving forward.

Generation gaps are also clear regarding communication methods for parents, teachers and students - only 3% of parents and teachers prefer Facebook and other social media. However if we want to reach out to more students (therein informally reaching out to more parents) 5 out of 21 teachers said social media might be a good way to do so,

with 4 suggesting more face-to-face outreach and videos (in class promo, at assemblies, etc).

Based on these observations our CLC would like to:

- *Ask a focus group of involved teachers & parents to brainstorm creative ways to do outreach in the school*

*“I was really not aware of the CLC and it’s involvement with Centennial. I would be interested to receive more information so that I could encourage my sons to become more involved” - Parent*

- *Encourage the School-at-large to promote its CLC status - perhaps have a “2014-2015 - Year of the CLC” school-wide outreach campaign - this could include more CLC announcements in larger school-issued publications and the school website, being a larger part of school-wide assemblies, being a central part of the annual Centennial Open House, going to conferences with school administration as a representative of the school, etc.*
- *Hone and increase outreach mechanisms that appeal to students - use language of young people, videos, twitter, FB and other social media*

## **FOCUS ON PARENTS**

Parents that are involved in certain programs (like Mother Goose, as we will see in the next section) are engaged and excited about the CLC and what it has to offer their learning and that of their children.

However, the Q’Anglo survey suggests there are a large number of parents that are unclear about how to engage with school programs, as we received mixed messages from the results.

It would be valuable to ask parents about the CLC face-to-face to clarify their confusion, understand their needs and work better with them moving forward.

Based on these observations, our CLC would like to:

- *Run focus groups with different groups of parents throughout 2014-2015 to further understand their relationship to engagement and educate them about the CLC at the same time*
- *Send a shorter, CLC-focused survey to parents at the end of 2014-2015 to see if these focus groups (and outreach campaign) have helped clarify our role and volunteer possibilities*

## TALKING TO STUDENTS - DEALING WITH ANXIETY!

Our students indicate they have a high level of intellectual engagement at school but a lower-than-average social and institutional engagement alongside issues of anxiety. There has been a drop in participation in activities across the grades and girls in particular are showing alarming averages in relationship to indicators that relate to positive engagement at school.

Based on these observations, our CLC would like to:

- Host a process (forum, open space) where students could talk to CLC, teachers and vice-principals about their curriculum needs and about how to make classes more intellectually engaging and relevant to them (*This would also directly connect to our ToC medium-term outcome that student input becomes a basis of program planning*)
- Talk to guidance and other school social support workers to see what programs we could partner on to work on these issues
- Focus on adding programs for girls that increase their social and institutional engagement
- Having vice-principals have a “drop-in” class where they can sit and be available to students



Community  
Support

Community Support

In addition to supporting in-school programming and services, the Centennial CLC acts as a catalyst for the community as a whole. Our programming truly runs for individuals of all ages: from the young-of-age to the young-at-heart!

### MOTHER GOOSE

One of our most popular and appreciated initiatives is our Mother Goose program, which we chose to evaluate this year. This is a pre-literacy program that gives young parents the opportunity to read, sing and interact with their babies ages 0-4. Sessions are free for participants and run for 10-12 weeks. Each session costs

upwards of \$2,000 and is sponsored by one of our partners. Due to a generous book donation, all families that attend bring home 7 new books at the end.

Reading with babies teaches communication and builds memory and a vast rich network of words<sup>1</sup> and improves math skills as a child grows, a subject that is a struggle for many Canadian children.<sup>2</sup> Singing also boosts reading abilities. With a generation so focused on technology, it is important to develop a strong love and appreciation for reading at the youngest age possible, which is exactly what seems to be happening at our Mother Goose program, according to statistics.

The rise in attendance and participation in this program has been amazing - from our first to our third session, we saw a 357% increase in regular appearance per week (from 7 to 25 families). We evaluated the impact of each session through a survey and

informal interviews to see if we were meeting needs assessed last school year. We were concerned with literacy rates within the home and wanted to foster a love of reading with children and

*“The CLC has been the most comprehensive way of reaching out to parents & the community...I am grateful for the activities provided and the support given by the CLC coordinators” - Parent*

informal interviews to see if we were assessed last school year. We were concerned with literacy rates within the home and wanted to foster a love of reading with children and

parents, break family isolation and assist new parents in the development of their competencies and confidence. In the next section, we will look at how the Mother Goose program has helped families meet needs and raise their awareness of CLC services.

## FINDINGS

Our findings show that the program’s impact went beyond what was anticipated. Results were staggering - we had many families attend two out of the three sessions.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/all\\_reading/reading\\_babies.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/all_reading/reading_babies.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10299763/Reading-for-pleasure-boosts-pupils-results-in-maths.html>

All parents have requested to continue, insisting on the importance of the program. 100% of surveyed families said they would highly recommend this program.

The majority of parents who attended the program were new parents (especially mothers) and felt they had made new connections. What was truly inspirational was the amount of mothers who felt more proficient in their abilities and increased their literacy interaction with their children. Through a rise in their comfort levels at home with their children, many parents mentioned that they enjoyed their child more. These results show we are on the right path.

Before getting involved in weekly sessions, 7 out of 10 parents were not aware of the CLC and its services. Since attending Mother Goose, they are aware of CLC initiatives and other community resources available to them. This illustrates how involvement in a CLC program can enable participants to integrate further into their community by way of a broadening network and understanding.

Due to the success of Mother Goose, the elementary school has now requested our CLC to expand our services into their daily school routine. Lunchtime programming, community-based service learning opportunities and parenting support will be implemented as of September 2014.



# Mother Goose

@ CRHS CLC

## Attendance

This year we held 3 sessions of Mother Goose. Each session rose in attendance and popularity. In the Fall of 2013 we enrolled 12 families with an average attendance of 7. In Winter 2014 we enrolled 17 families. And in Spring 2014 session had a whopping 32 families, with an average of 25 in attendance each week!



90% of parents say that due to Mother Goose, they sing more often with their children than before

70% now tell stories to child after attending Mother Goose

50% read more with their child after Mother Goose

100% would highly recommend this program to a friend

70% of the Mother Goose participants feel more confident as a parent or caregiver

**Mother Goose has helped parents:**

100% say they enjoy spending time with their child more  
80% have made new friends or acquaintances and decreased their isolation

*Why is Mother Goose so important?!*

## PARENT COMMENTS

"Watching my child laugh & smile while singing and trying to do the actions. Seeing that he is remembering some of the words and singing at home as well."

"We experienced a difficult time and the animators were very supportive and understanding."

"It's always nice to meet others in the same situation as you. This has been important for me because we are relatively new to the South Shore. It has also been useful finding out about community events for the same reason."

"My son really enjoyed coming and so did I! He met new friends and I did too, some of which I think we will be for a while. It was something we always looked forward to!"

"Long car rides have become a great time to share all these songs. I keep the Mother Goose song book in the car at all times!"

"Learning new songs has allowed us to play more at home."

"I see how excited my daughter is to come here and how her eyes sparkle."



# Partnerships

A community organization is only as strong as its partnership table! The Centennial CLC Partnership table is made up of numerous

organizations located on the South Shore. Its diversity and commitment make for a dynamic combination. It is responsible for: creating the CLC's ToC, needs assessments, creating programs and bringing neighborhood resources together.

The 2013-2014 school year has seen an upwelling of contribution and interaction at the table - we have gone from 12 to 20 partnerships, with the majority of new partners coming to us! When we first began partnering with others, we had to do all the legwork - that this is changing is showing a shift in community engagement with the CLC.

In September 2013, we collectively agreed to divide the table into four subcommittees to make meetings more efficient and focused (*Youth Empowerment and Engagement, Parent/Family Support and Healthy Living, Life Long Learning/Community Engagement, Governing board*). These groups meet twice during the school year to plan and implement programs and initiatives. The governing board is responsible for legalities, funding and the logistics of running programming and services.

*“The CLC makes it easier to find and make connections in the community.”*

*“The CLC gives one of the rare chances and places to meet others in the community and network.” -*

Partners

## STORYTELLING: METHODS AND GATHERING

Engagement was our “evaluation theme” this year, so the CLC chose to look at not only the efficacy and escalation of the CLC amongst its community peers but its contribution to community connectivity. The main questions we wanted to gain insight about were:

- *What are the highlights of being part of the CLC Partnership Table?*
- *How has the CLC assisted as a partner to your organization?*
- *Do you feel more connected to the Centennial Community? Other community organizations?*
- *How do you feel the Centre could or should grow?*

Initially we wanted to collect data using arts-based techniques but the partnership table did not show an interest in this methodology. Instead, we did a “world café” style evaluation where questions were laid out on tables throughout the CLC. This allowed partners a chance to share responses and network at the same time.

## FINDINGS - THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS

One of the main themes that kept appearing on world café sheets was the value of *networking*. For partners, the CLC table had become a place where they could regularly meet, exchange ideas and get assistance from one another. It was clear to see they appreciated this opportunity to connect. Many were able to make connections during partnership meetings to fill gaps within their mandates and practices. For example, one of our partners pressingly needed a space to hold their program on Wednesdays. After discussing their needs at a CLC meeting, the pastor at a local church was gladly able to assist.

Community members agreed that a highlight of their involvement at the CLC was these new community contacts they were making with other groups. This year alone, over a dozen connections were made between partners outside of the CLC. Organizations spoke to the importance of the CLC table as a way to break “silo work” and bring community together.

When asking about how they felt the CRHS CLC has grown this year they answered:

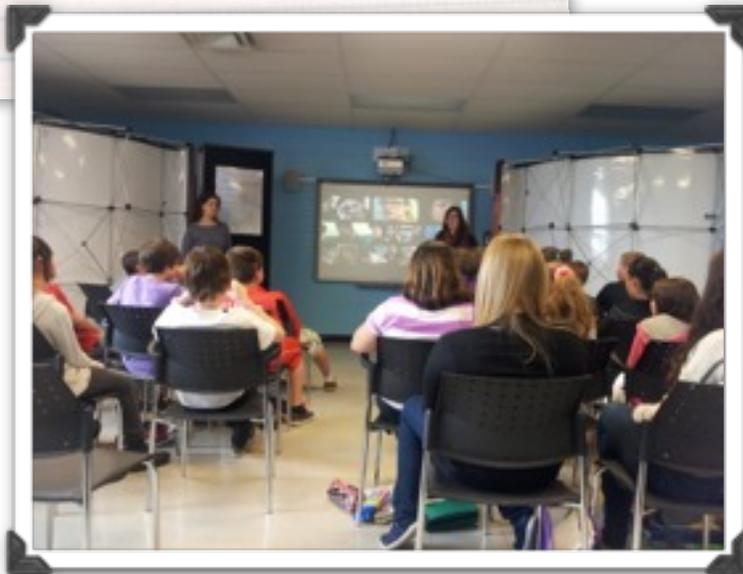
- *More diversified activities*
- *More teacher awareness*
- *More parent involvement*
- *More workshops available for parents with practical tools*
- *More student participation*
- *I feel great because the community is in the school itself, doing activities + programs*

The CLC gives partners a chance to connect with each other, get more engaged in the greater community and acts as a bridging point - and the word is getting out!



# COMMUNITY - IPAD course

One of the basic needs assessed from the inauguration of the CLC was breaking isolation through increased engagement in community residents of all ages, particularly in the senior population.



The CLC, in partnership with ACCESS (our Adult Education and Vocational Training Centre) has created *Social Integration* courses geared towards seniors learning how to use IPADs and technology. They are held weekly at the Centennial CLC and are extremely well attended. While we held many other parenting and adult workshops, we chose to evaluate the IPAD courses due to the longevity of the program.

## STORYTELLING: METHODS AND GATHERING

We asked seniors in their class to fill out an online survey using their IPADs (thereby reinforcing their learning) and 32 people responded (100% response rate). The main goal in evaluating this program was to see if this segment of our community felt more engaged.

We wanted to know if:

- a) *Isolation was being broken;*
- b) *A stronger sense of community was being developed; and,*
- c) *An increased interest in connecting with the school community.*

At the same time, we wanted to know if attending this class had sensitized people to the CLC and our other programs.

## **FINDINGS**

Overall, participants loved their experience and felt that they grew in their technological and social abilities - 100% of participants feel more comfortable using technology and their IPAD. Participants felt more connected to their community and peers and had a desire to be more involved in the school community. Many learned more about the CLC and its services - 65% of participants said if the CLC was open outside of their IPAD class hours, they would be interested in: a) *visiting the centre for other programs* b) *coming to our used bookstore* or c) *generally use the space.*

Only 20% said that if the CLC was not offering the course, they would be taking the course elsewhere. The rest indicated they would still be at home due to a lack of services, awareness or cost. This breakdown of seclusion lead to a desire to have new and more programs to go to in the future.

In addition to what the IPAD course brought the learners, they gave back to the school with donations over \$1500! Contributions ranged from used books for all ages, clothing for our used boutique, materials and resources and food for students.

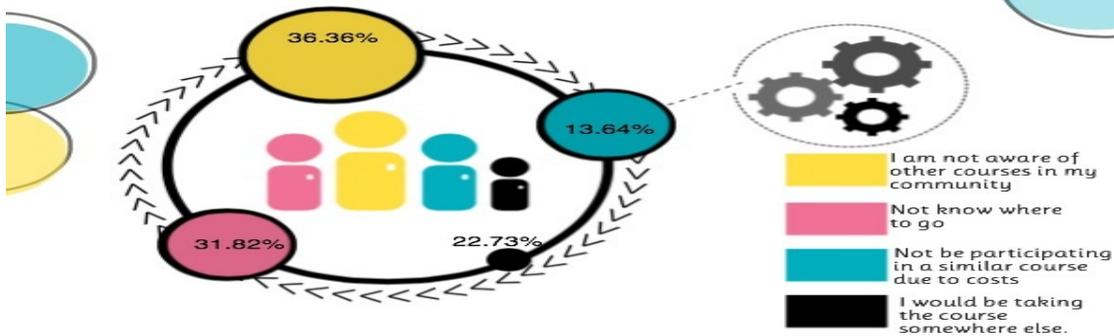
# IPAD!

*Community Engagement at its best!*



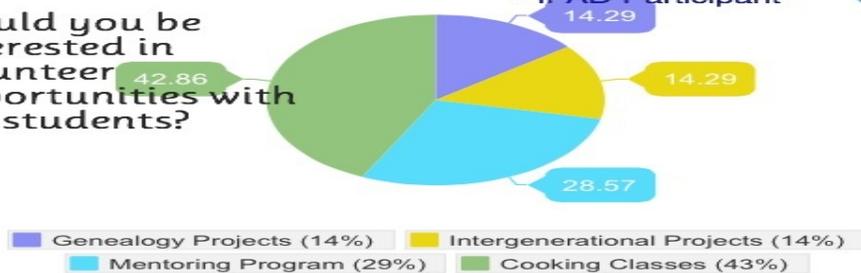
After having participated in the IPAD Courses the last few weeks, do you have a stronger sense of connection to the school community?

## IF THIS PROGRAM/COURSE WAS NOT OFFERED WOULD YOU:



## Future Connections:

Would you be interested in volunteer opportunities with the students?



"I am a more interested than previously after attending the classes."  
- IPAD Participant



Along with the observations and recommendations we made concerning Student Success and Engagement, here are other general “next steps” we believe are important for our CLC’s realization of medium and long term outcomes.

## **EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEXT YEAR**

- We’re learning that proper evaluation takes time! Next year, we’ll start a little sooner (beginning of November)
- Having an active (and at times “captive”) audience of respondents works well - the IPAD course had a 100% return rate in part because they did their surveys in class. We will ask staff to hold student focus groups during class time and not during lunch
- We would like to get the PPO and other community organizations involved in evaluations next year
- We will focus on specific topics (that follow from this year’s evaluation) and not a huge amount of programs
- The arts-based methods we tried were less successful than we had hoped. We look forward to researching and learning more about these methods and using them when appropriate next year

## INCREASING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

- We are curious to know more about SROI (Social Return on Investment) and other evaluation techniques and would love an increase in support and resources to be able to do this moving forward. We learned a great deal about evaluation during this process and having further professional development in this area would secure a level of sustainability in these reports necessary to make them worthwhile.
- For the CLC initiative to reach its potential, we recommend that part-time CLC coordinators become full-time staff with permanent jobs and benefits. With greater institutional support, the CLC would be that much more stable in providing much-needed services to students and community. We would also be able to do more intensive evaluation and outreach in the future.



## INVOLVING ALL LEVELS OF THE SCHOOL

- The CLC was evaluated by parents, teachers, community members and students. In 2014-2015, we plan on asking the Council of Commissioners how they see our programs and worth. In order for the CLC to fully thrive, we need to be understood and visible to all levels of the school, including in administrative and board spaces.

## RE-VISITING THE TOC AT THE COMMITTEE LEVEL

- We will be re-visiting our ToC and this report at the CLC Committee level. This will ensure that areas that need adjusting or change based on our observations and recommendations become held by the collective and that democratic governance is assured throughout this process.

## CELEBRATING OUR HARD WORK!

- Finally, we will take time to celebrate our CLC, its volunteers, partners, student-mentors and community members. This report has illustrated the hard work that we have done, which has certainly not been in isolation, but in community. We will make sure to appreciate all we have accomplished as we wind Year 3 down and start thinking to Year 4!



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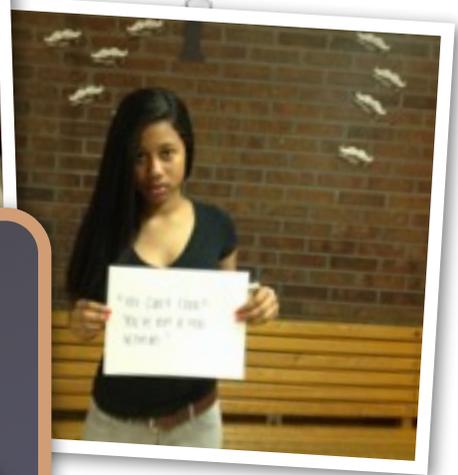
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The Centennial CLC would like to thank all of our partners for your ongoing support, critical reflection and energy that go into making our Community Learning Centre a place where lifelong learning can happen!



# APPENDIX A

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & ENGAGEMENT BOARD		
Ruth Thomas	South Shore Reading Council	2nd year
Elizabeth Kutter	YIELD Coordinator RSB	2nd year
Stephanie James	Skills4uEducation & Parent	2nd year
Angela Vipond	CRHS E100	2nd year
Alan Briand	Community Partner/ Accountant	2nd year
Catherine Lambert	CLSC & CRHS Nurse	2nd year
Peter Sheremeta	Terry Fox Foundation	New this year
Benoit Robert	Longueuil Police	2nd year
Shanna Bachand	CIJAD Laporte	New this year
Muhammad B.	Longueuil Libraries	New this year

## PARENTS/FAMILY SUPPORT & HEALTHY LIVING BOARD

Ruth Thomas	South Shore Reading Council	2nd Year
Stephanie James	Skills4uEducation + Parent	2nd Year
Juan-Carlos Quintana	ACCESS	2nd Year
Catherine Lambert	CLSC & CRHS Nurse	2nd Year
Philippa Settels	Green Leaf Consulting	New
Sylvia Haley	Parent, ACSSSN, PPO	New

## LIFE LONG LEARNING COMMUNITY/SENIOR ENGAGEMENT BOARD

Ruth Thomas	South Shore Reading Council	2nd Year
Jim Monroe	Community Member	New
Juan-Carlos Quintana	ACCESS	2nd Year
Annie Beauregard	RSB Spiritual Animator	2nd Year
Brian Talbot	GFP Baptist Church	2nd Year
David Sherman	L3 Groups	2nd Year
Benoit Robert	Longueuil Police	2nd Year

UNSIGNED		
Robert Myles	GFP President	New
Martin Carmel	Ville de Longueuil	New
Sadia Groghue	NDP Depute	New
Carol Marriott		2nd Year
CEDEC		2nd Year
Jocelyn Armstrong		New
Maria De Los Angeles Martinez=Flores	RAPID	New
South Shore Black Community Association		New
Annie Chapados	Ville de Longueuil	New

## APPENDIX B

	IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION Human Resource Expertise \$\$\$	IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION Materials and Resources \$\$\$	FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION Grants & Donations \$\$\$	
Student Engagement	\$ 29,550.00	\$ 128,353.17	\$ 13,805.00	Total of All: \$171,708.17
Community Engagement	\$ 3,275.00	\$ 3,244.00	\$ 7,190.00	TOTAL OF ALL: \$13,709
Health & Wellbeing	\$ 400.00	\$ -	\$ 350.00	TOTAL OF ALL: \$750.00
Other (meetings, partnerships, stagieres, Parenting workshops)	\$ 27,650.00	\$ 460.00	\$ 1,683.05	TOTAL OF ALL: \$29,793.05
Life Long Learning	\$ 50.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	TOTAL of all : \$550.00
				GRAND TOTAL OF ALL: \$216,510.22