

VOLUME 60 ISSUE 1

SPRING 2022

QFHSA NEWS

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL MEMBERS

**We're Springing Forward
through Rain and Shine!**

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The Quebec
Federation of
Home and School
Associations

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

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

We welcome your letters!

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

The QFHSA's Annual General Meeting: *Join the Discussion, Cast Your Vote*

THE 2022 QFHSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will take place on June 2nd. For the third year in a row, the meeting will be held on Zoom. The QFHSA's staff and Board of Directors are very much looking forward to the return of our organization's in-person events, which we hope will happen in the 2022/23 school year.

As in previous years, the QFHSA's committees have been looking at the recent educational landscape and studying the latest legislation that will affect our parents and our students.

To date, they have prepared five resolutions for delegates at this year's Annual General Meeting to caucus and adopt. The adoption of resolutions demonstrates the QFHSA community's continued interest in education; it shows our determination to give voice to our ideas and concerns and advocate for change.

A summary of the proposed resolutions follows. For the full text of the resolutions, please visit our website www.qfhsa.org. On the left menu, select "About," then "Resolutions," and then "2022 Proposed Resolutions." You can also use this link: <https://adobe.ly/3wUVs50>.



Resolution 2022-01: Objection to the Definition of "Historic" Anglophones and the Consequent Restrictions to Eligibility for Services in English

The first proposed resolution was developed by the QFHSA Rights Subcommittee after its careful examination of the Quebec govern-

ment's Bill 96 and its ramifications for Quebec's English-speaking community. Our resolution insists that the Government of Quebec not relegate English-speaking Quebecers to a "historic" community or limit their right to receive government communications and services in English. The committee believes the Quebec government should never base rights or access to services on a person's eligibility for English education. Rather, the government should follow International Human Rights tenets to ensure the safeguarding and preservation of the cultural identity of Quebecers who identify themselves as being part of the common

English-language linguistic minority group so that they may continue to thrive and help contribute to Quebec's success on the world stage.



Resolution 2022-02: Request to Maintain Race, Religion, and Culture as Central Themes in the Proposed Citizenship Course

The QFHSA Rights Subcommittee is very concerned that as publicized, the proposed replacement course for the Ethics and Religious Culture program places too much emphasis on Quebec culture and citizenship. We are concerned that the enforcement of Law 21 will influence this new curriculum and reduce the opportunity for our students to learn about other religions and cultures. This resolution strongly recommends to the Minister of Education of Quebec that race, religion, and culture remain central themes in the new Quebec Citizenship and Culture course.

Further, the Rights Subcommittee believes the new citizenship course must incorporate the following recommendations from the Quebec government's *Groupe d'action contre le racisme*:

- *Include racism and discrimination issues throughout the school curriculum.*
- *Change the academic curriculum at the primary and secondary levels to update concepts related to the history, cultures, heritage and current realities of Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Canada and their impact on society.*

Continued on the next page

Join us!

**Quebec Federation
of Home and School
Associations'**

**78th
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

**Thursday, June 2nd, 2022
6:30 p.m. on Zoom**

Each local Home and School Association is invited to send one delegate to the meeting. Registration forms are now available. For more information, please contact the office at info@qfhsa.org or the president of your local H&S Association.

Annual General Meeting

Continued from the previous page



Resolution 2022-03: A Call to Suspend and Amend Law 21

Law 21 continues to be a local, regional, provincial, national, and international embarrassment. This QFHSA resolution insists that the Government of Quebec do two things. First, immediately suspend Law 21; and second, initiate a comprehensive review and debate of Law 21 in the National Assembly to address the sections of the law that fail to respect Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Section 3 of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms of Quebec. The resolution demands the amendment of the problematic sections of Law 21 so that they respect both charters.



Resolution 2022-04: Request to Be Included in Future Consultations as a Partner in Education

The QFHSA has been recognized as a “Partner in Education” with the Ministry of Education for many years. This resolution requests that the Ministry of Education of Quebec invite representatives of the QFHSA to all future consultation sessions it organizes.



Resolution 2022-05: The Offering of Bilingual Services by Student Ombudsmen

The fifth resolution addresses Bill 9, *An Act respecting the National Student Ombudsman*. This bill will restructure services available for students, children, and parents in all regions of the province of Quebec. The QFHSA wishes to ensure that

services in French and English remain available to all Quebecers, no matter where they reside in the province. This resolution insists that the Minister of Education, Recreation, and Sports of Quebec guarantee that the National Student Ombudsman and the Regional Student Ombudsmen be capable of offering services in French and English in all regions of the province of Quebec.

As Quebec’s political situation continues to evolve and other local, national, and international issues arise, the Rights Subcommittee may create more resolutions in the coming weeks. If this happens, the additional resolutions will be shared with local Home & School Associations.

Home and School delegates will have an opportunity to learn more about all of this year’s resolutions—the subject matter they address and their implications for our students’ education prior to the Annual General Meeting.

If the resolutions are adopted at the Annual General Meeting, they will be sent to the Minister of Education, the Premier of Quebec, and other education partners in Quebec. Decisions made in Quebec City by the National Assembly seriously affect the quality of our children’s education. It is important that parents are aware and that their voices are heard.

Carol Meindl, *On Behalf of the QFHSA Rights Subcommittee*

Join the QFHSA’s WORDLE Challenge!

Are you hooked on WORDLE too?
The QFHSA invites all our members to join our **Spring WORDLE Challenge!**

Each time you get a word in three (3) guesses or less, email your result to info@qfhsa.org and we will enter your name in a book draw.

The contest runs from Sunday, April 10th until Friday, May 6th. We’ll announce our winners right after Mother’s Day!

***Improving our English language prowess (plus our patience)—
all thanks to WORDLE!***

Haven’t played yet? Visit <https://www.nytimes.com> and scroll down the Home Page to the “Play” section and select WORDLE. You can also use this link: <https://nyti.ms/37Bfas6>.



Photos from Adobe Stock

Dates to Remember

Friday, May 6	Deadline for Submissions: All 2021-2022 QFHSA Awards
Thursday, May 12 and Monday, May 16	Regional Council Meetings with Local Home & School Associations
Thursday, June 2	QFHSA’s 78th Annual General Meeting
Friday, June 17	Deadline for submissions for the <i>QFHSA News</i> —Summer Edition



The Final Months of School Are Here!

Time to Celebrate the Stars of Your School Community

A Message from the QFHSA's President

I HOPE YOU WERE ABLE TO ENJOY a restful, relaxing, and fun Spring Break. As the month of April begins, it is time to prepare for the end of the school year by reviewing your constitutions and by-laws, making sure your membership lists are up to date for your Annual General Meetings, and hopefully (fingers crossed), arranging graduations and end-of-school events. It's been a long two years!

It is also the time to think about all that your school and local Home and School Association have been able to accomplish this past year. I am sure it has not always been easy trying to plan activities and events in the midst of this very long pandemic, always mindful of the changing COVID situation. I salute you for all of your efforts.

I also encourage all of our local Home and School Associations to participate in the QFHSA's annual awards program. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the volunteers who have worked so hard this year for our students, parents, and school staff. You will find more information about the Golden Torch and Unsung Hero awards on Page 10 of this newsletter.

I am also pleased to announce that the QFHSA has brought back our major awards this year. The last time the awards were given was in the spring of 2019—before the pandemic upset our normal ways of doing many things! I strongly encourage you to nominate an educa-

tor, volunteer, or school initiative for an award. You will find information about the major awards also on Page 10 of this newsletter.

In other news, the Quebec Government Committee on Culture and Education is continuing its clause-by-clause study of Bill 96. You can follow the proceedings on the committee's website. To do so, go to <https://assnat.qc.ca>, select "Parliamentary Proceedings," and select "Bills" from the menu. Scroll down the list of bills for the current session of parliament until you reach Bill 96. You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/3lxaVf0>.

We are still waiting for the Superior Court judgment on Bill 40 and for more information on the new Quebec Culture and Citizenship program, which is to be piloted in some schools this fall.

QFHSA board and staff members are working on the agenda for our June Annual General Meeting and we hope to have a representative from the Ministry of Education in attendance.

Please take care and stay safe.

Rosemary Murphy



Photo by Pixabay from Pexels

Join the QFHSA Board of Directors!

Help us make an impact in the lives of Quebec children and youth! The QFHSA is actively seeking interested persons to volunteer to serve on the QFHSA Board of Directors.

Directors are involved in all aspects of the organization, from keeping up to date on issues concerning education and rights, to exploring new projects, to promoting literacy, to offering best practice advice to local Home and School Associations. Directors sit at community tables and bring the perspective of the parent to the attention of education stakeholders and decision makers. Directors also help draft resolutions and briefs

to the federal and/or provincial governments. Directors assist in the development of new projects for Home and School students and parents. There is plenty to do and the job can be a wonderful and rewarding learning experience.

The QFHSA Board of Directors meets on average eight times a year to discuss Home and School policy and plan our organization's events. If you or someone you know is interested in joining our team, a great first step would be to sit in on a board meeting as an observer to see what it is all about. For more information, please call the QFHSA office at 514-481-5619 or email info@qfhsa.org.

What Then Must We Do?

A Message from the Executive Director



THE CURRENT CONFLICT IN UKRAINE makes us reflect on our own situation here in Canada and helps us put things into perspective. Compared to sheltering in a basement with mortar shells dropping all around you and with food and water sources becoming scarce, complaining about mask mandates and vaccine passports seems infantile and insensitive.

However, we need to tread carefully and keep this a response to a humanitarian cause and not get caught up in the politics. Some of our schools will have children of both Ukrainian and Russian descent, and we do not want them to feel they are caught in the crossfire. This is a struggle between Putin and the country of Ukraine, not between the children of Ukrainian and Russian immigrants in Quebec.

There are many organizations that assist refugees in various countries around the world. Let us not forget other refugees as our attention is currently tuned to Europe. Home and Schools should talk with their principals and Governing Boards to see if there is a way for the parent community to garner financial support for refugee relief organizations in general. The Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, and Save the Children are just some of the many organizations mobilized around the world, including in the Ukraine, to aid and assist refugees. You will find links for several of these organizations below.

And yet, we feel compelled to act.



Photo by Matti from Pexels

There are organizations here in Quebec already mobilizing aid to Ukraine via Poland. Undoubtedly, our school boards may be developing directions for school administrators already in regard to this. If we can all work together toward this common goal, everyone will benefit.

Carol Meindl

Helping Refugees: Where Can I Make a Donation?

Charity Intelligence Canada recommends the following organizations:

- **Doctors without Borders/MSF Canada:** Visit <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/> or use this link: <https://bit.ly/3I4ETpi>
- **Canadian Red Cross:** Visit <https://www.redcross.ca/> or use this link: <https://bit.ly/3w5WQ4D>
- **Save the Children Canada:** Visit <https://www.savethechildren.ca/> or use this link: <https://bit.ly/3w6i5mW>
- **World Vision Canada:** Visit <https://www.worldvision.ca/> or use this link: <https://bit.ly/3CFyQ9J>

Also:

- **Canada-Ukraine Foundation Appeal:** Visit <https://www.cufoundation.ca/>

Photo by Kostiantyn Stupak from Pexels



The children of both Ukraine and Russia will suffer over the coming months. Food will become scarce, supplies of many things will be restricted, and the relatively comfortable lives that both sides had known until recently will be upended. If we thought dealing with a global pandemic and having our children stuck at home away from their friends were traumatic, imagine enduring long train and bus rides and trudging kilometers in the winter to reach the border of a foreign country and leaving everything behind!

As parents, we are moved to do something to help the situation. We see the faces of our own children when we see those families struggling to flee their bombed cities and towns. As Home and Schools, we naturally wish to mobilize our parents to respond to this humanitarian crisis unfolding before us.

The January Regional Council Meetings: *Sharing Ideas, Information, and Support*

FOR THREE NIGHTS in late January, volunteers from local Home & School Associations joined with QFHSA board members and staff for a series of regional council meetings. Organized periodically by the QFHSA, these meetings feature wide-ranging conversations on a variety of topics. While there can be no doubt that the COVID pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for local Home & School Associations, our regional councils reveal just how adept local associations have become at adapting and changing plans as needed—sometimes at the very last minute! Here is the news local associations shared during those Zoom discussions on January 18th, 20th, and 24th.

Highlights from a Busy Fall

When you think back, life was pretty good in the fall of 2021. We were blissfully between major waves of the pandemic, and no one had yet heard the words, “Omicron variant.” While it was not exactly “back to normal” for Home & School Associations, things seemed to be moving in the right direction.

Although the rules did not allow for in-school volunteering at many schools, that did not stop local Home & School Associations from bringing back many well-loved activities and events. We learned that lunchtime food fundraisers were happening at many schools, often thanks to the help of daycare educators and other members of the school staff. Pizza, Subway, and treats were back!

And there have been celebrations! It was amazing to hear about all the outdoor and indoor fun students have had thanks to our busy local associations. Edinburgh Home & School organized a welcome event for kindergarten parents outside. Forest Hill Jr’s volunteers organized a Terry Fox Run. St. Patrick’s family drive-in movie events continued to be a runaway success. Introduced as a morale-booster during the first year of the pandemic, these movie events even feature a Home & School-run concession stand when pandemic rules allow.

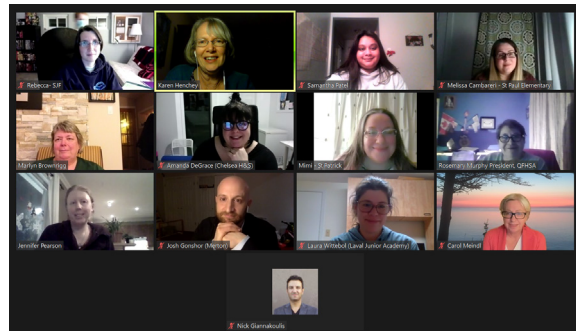
holiday break, students enjoyed pancake breakfasts, pajama days, and visits from Santa. When the Quebec government abruptly announced on December 20th that schools would close that afternoon for the holidays, it meant the sudden cancellation of events Home & Schools had planned for the last days of school. Ever resourceful, local associations pivoted to Plan B: They froze the food items they could and set their sights on replacement events in the new year.

Home & Schools also planned events and activities to support the morale of teachers and school staff. There have been monthly coffee mornings, sweets tables, staff lunches, Zoom yoga classes, and special gifts and treats.

Fundraising in a Pandemic

This fall, Home & Schools proved once again that not only is fundraising possible during a pandemic, it can be very successful, too! Home & Schools are doing a lot of the fundraising online, often with the help of suppliers that coordinate sales from their own websites. Here are some of this fall’s fundraisers:

- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Popcorn
- OLA Bamboo (Green products)
- Maple syrup
- Recipes in a Jar
- Big Box Fundraising (A box of greeting cards)
- BoSapin Christmas trees



Zooming on January 24th

When Halloween rolled around, there were pumpkin patches, pumpkin decorating events, haunted houses, and classroom door decorating contests. The Grade Six students at St. Charles had a Halloween dance (indoors), and Home and School was happy to supply loot bags and T-shirts for the Class of '22.

As November turned into December, Home & Schools organized visits from the Santa Bus complete with outdoor dancing, music, and fun. At Beacon Hill, students bundled up and decorated Christmas trees outside, and sang in a virtual holiday concert. In the final days before the

Continued on the next page

News for You

January Regional Councils

Continued from the previous page

- FundScrip or Flipgive (Gift card purchases)
- Catalogue sales
- Bottle drives
- Pizza/Doughnuts
- Virtual book fairs (or combined virtual/in-person events)
- Spirit wear clothing
- Online toy auctions (with toys donated by suppliers)
- Dress-Down Day (Students pay \$2 and don't have to wear their school uniform)
- St. Charles's Big Bang Event – A Virtual Edition! (Participants buy a \$10 ticket and see what prize they get when the balloons are popped/the virtual wheel is spun.)
- Merton's Birthday Book fundraiser (Parents purchase a book dedicated to their birthday child from Home & School for their child's classroom library.)

Would you like to learn more about these fundraisers? Don't hesitate to ask your question in the QFHSA Think Tank Facebook group (see Page 22 of this newsletter) or email Marlyn at marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org.

Putting those Fundraising Dollars to Good Use

Many Home & Schools set aside funds each year for teachers to purchase classroom items. Other funds are dedicated for special teacher projects and wish lists for educational events and activities.

Home & Schools also dedicate a great deal of fundraising effort to improving school life, both within the school building and on school

grounds. **Westwood**, for example, is raising money for a scoreboard for its senior campus. **Forest Hill Jr** is purchasing additional outdoor equipment for students. Both **St. Patrick** and **South Hull** are looking forward to breaking ground on new playgrounds/outdoor education centres. For such large projects, the Home & School's fundraising dollars are often combined with funds received from other sources, including local city councillors, the school board, and the provincial government.

Back to School in January, Albeit Online...

As we know, the rise of the Omicron variant delayed the return to in-person classes in January. Students spent the better part of a week learning online before Quebec elementary and high schools reopened their doors on January 17th. How did online learning go this time around? Quite well, according to most Home & School executives at the regional council meetings. There were some hiccups—when, for example, teachers in the same school did not use the same online platform or children in the younger grades did not warm up to the online format. By all reports, parents were relieved to have a smoother online learning experience this time around, and also very relieved when schools reopened for in-person learning.

What Would the Winter Bring?

Despite the pandemic's challenges, local Home & Schools were looking ahead to the winter months, planning yet more activities to raise the spirits of their school community.

Continued on the next page

Bringing Volunteers Back to School: One Home & School's Story

École Primaire Beaconsfield's Home & School Association (EPB) found a way to bring a significant number of volunteers back into their school. As the new school year began, it was clear that both the Home & School and the school's administration were eager to have parent volunteers back at school so that many of the school's beloved volunteer projects could return—classroom parents, library helpers, and more.

The catch: It would be important that all volunteers entering the school were fully vaccinated. Home & School executives consulted with the school board, the provincial government, and the QFHSA. With the information they gathered and after confirming that reading a QR code did not conflict with confidentiality in the H&S by-laws, EPB built a registry of eligible parent volunteers. Over 100 parents emailed a copy of their QR code to the Home & School, which then added the parents' names to the master registry. With this system, H&S was able to bring in 23 class parents and more. Volunteers enter and exit the school by a separate entrance with a sanitation station set up for them.

A win-win situation for all—and a great collaboration between a local Home & School association and the school's administration.

January Regional Councils

Continued from the previous page

Top of mind was how to celebrate Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week (TSAW). Many Home & Schools were planning a week of treats and gifts culminating in a staff luncheon, often with the help of a caterer that could provide individual meal packages. At the January 24th meeting, everyone was interested in St. Paul's plans for TSAW: A fabulous cruise—an imaginary get away with a new and interesting daily menu at each port of call. *You can read more about St. Paul's activity in the "Focus on the Locals" section of this newsletter.*

Several Home & Schools had lined up a visit from Jungle Sport. Many were also planning to repeat the popular events they organized for the first time ever during the pandemic. There would be more virtual

pub trivia nights and comedy galas, more family pizza-making nights, and more spring break scavenger hunts. It remained unclear whether COVID restrictions would force the cancellation or reinvention of such events as field days, art galas, and spring fairs. Some Home & Schools were planning to go ahead with their popular end-of-year school concerts and talent shows, making them virtual events if need be.

At the meetings, we also discussed the efforts individual Home & Schools were making to help combat climate change.

We also heard about the wonderful ways Home & Schools are helping others. They deliver Halloween pumpkins to neighbourhood seniors and purchase gift cards for families in need, to name a couple of examples.

Merton Home & School even found the time for a brand new initiative: "Help the Homeless." Each week, Merton organizes a sandwich-making crew that prepares hundreds of sandwiches for people living in shelters and on the street.

Once again, the QFHSA's regional council meetings revealed the incredible ingenuity and creativity of local Home & School Associations. They have an amazing ability to go with the flow and find new ways of working in these far-from-normal times. Thank you to all the Home & School executives who participated in our January meetings, and for all you do to enhance school life for students and staff.

See you at the next round of regional councils!

Karen Henchey,
Communications Officer

Feeling the Impact of Law 21 at Chelsea Elementary

At the January 24th regional council meeting, Chelsea Home & School shared its problems with Law 21. Last March, Fatemeh Anvari, who wears a hijab, was hired by the Western Québec School Board. In October, she was offered a permanent position at Chelsea school, and given a Grade 3 classroom. About a month later, the school was informed that Anvari could no longer teach in a classroom because of her hijab. She has since been reassigned to a literacy/diversity project.

Anvari's students, Chelsea parents, and the entire community have been in an uproar over the teacher's removal from the classroom. As the news spread, it became clear that a lot of people in the school community were unaware of Law 21 and its implications.

The Chelsea situation received a lot of media attention, with such news outlets as *The Washington Post* and *France 24 Hrs* picking up the story.

Back at Chelsea, the children tied green ribbons on the school fence for Miss Fatemeh. (Green is her favourite colour.) As Home and School President Amanda DeGrace explained, young children could not understand why Miss Fatemeh could no longer be their teacher and it was a challenge for parents to explain why this had to be. It has also meant that a Grade 3 class had to live through another big change in their classroom. It is abundantly clear that the Quebec teacher shortage is affecting Chelsea and so the loss of a qualified (and much loved) teacher has been especially hard to bear.



Celebrating Exceptional Educators, Initiatives, and Volunteers

AFTER A TWO-YEAR HIATUS due to the pandemic, the QFHSA is very pleased to bring back its major awards program. The awards recognize the important contributions of students, educators, and parents to Quebec education. Local Home and School Associations are invited to submit nominations for four major awards. You can find more information about these awards (**along with the nomination forms for each**) on our website www.qfhsa.org. From our Home Page, select “Events” on the left menu, then select “Awards.” **Deadline for submissions: May 6**

Pat Lewis Environmental Award

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

Pat Lewis Humanitarian Award

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

Lewis Peace Prize

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

Home & School Volunteer of the Year Award

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

Plus... Recognize More Local Heroes!

EACH YEAR, the QFHSA helps local Home & Schools recognize the heroes in their midst—those Home & School volunteers and other volunteers who have made a difference in school life. During the pandemic, many H&Ss have needed the support of the school administration, teachers, and support staff to accomplish their work in addition to their stellar volunteers. Who would you like to recognize in 2021/22? We are pleased to offer H&Ss a couple of options:

1. For individuals: certificates and lapel pins (Cost: \$10) As in previous years, you can present **individuals** with the Unsung Hero and Golden Torch awards.

2. For groups: certificates only (Cost: \$5) You can also **recognize a group** of Unsung Heroes from your school who went above and beyond to help your H&S accomplish its activities. Perhaps your lunch monitors stepped in to help or a team of teachers?

About the Awards

The **Unsung Hero** award recognizes **volunteers, teachers, staff members, and administrators** who are actively involved in everyday school life, who have proven to be helpful, reliable and courteous, who honour their commitments throughout the school year, and who have been willing to take on additional responsibilities when the

need arose, sometimes even behind the scenes. The dedication of these individuals merits recognition locally and provincially.

The **Golden Torch** award recognizes **H&S Association/committee members** who have demonstrated active leadership, organizational skills, encouragement of the participation of all volunteers, and whose dedication merits its recognition locally and provincially.

The awards form (for both the Golden Torch and Unsung Hero awards) is available on our website's Home Page: www.qfhsa.org. You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/36UXxU7>

Deadline for submissions: May 6

And
There's
More!

Home & School Newsletter Award

Recognize the valiant efforts of your communications volunteer(s). Enter your Home & School's newsletter for consideration for the QFHSA Newsletter Award. The newsletter awards form is available on our website's Home Page: www.qfhsa.org. You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/37hvRIY>.

Deadline for submissions: May 6

Telling Our Stories: Uncovering Canadian Black History with Marlene Jennings, Dorothy Williams, and Linton Garner



“IT IS TIME FOR US TO GO BACK AND FETCH WHAT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN: the history of Black Canadians.” This was the important message shared at the QFHSA’s Black History Month workshop, an event held twice in early February. Approximately 50 people attended the February 1st event, and 40 attended the February 10th event. Attendees included representatives from local Home & School Associations, community organizations, English school boards, universities, as well as elected members of both the provincial and federal governments.

The workshops were a collaboration of several organizations. The QFHSA partnered with the Community Learning Centre Initiative (CLC) of the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN) and the Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of the History of Quebec (ComeECH). The workshops also received important financial support from Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives (CSMARI) of Patrimoine Canadian Heritage (PCH) and in-kind support from a variety of community groups.

How can we move forward without knowing our history and learning from it? What lessons can that history teach us? The workshops explored these questions and more. We need to hear more stories and give everyone a voice so that we can have an inclusive and diverse society for all.

Marlene Jennings, a former member of the Canadian Parliament and the current president of the Quebec Community Groups Network, was the host for the evening. She was joined by Dr. Dorothy Williams and Mr. Linton Garner. Dr. Williams is an archivist and historian whose writings include books chronicling the history of Black Montrealers and the *ABC’s of Canadian Black History Kit*, an educational resource on Canadian Black history. In addition to being the co-creator of the *ABC’s of Canadian Black History*, Linton Garner is an active member of the non-profit community as well as the Quebec regional director of the Canadian Association of Black Journalists, the host of CityLife Outaouais TV, and the marketing and sales director at blacbiblio.com (the publisher of *ABC’s*).

Jennings began the workshop by looking back to April 27, 1954, the day when Stanley G. Grizzle, the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and a member of the Joint Labour Committee to Combat Racial Intolerance, met with federal ministers in Ottawa to discuss our country’s unfair immigration practices. Grizzle was part of a delegation of Black Canadians that traveled to our nation’s capital for this meeting. At the time, Canada prioritized immigration from such countries as Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa over other countries—India, Pakistan, and the Caribbean nations, to name a few. The delegation advocated for a Canada based on inclusiveness and diversity; a Canada that welcomes people from any country. Jennings, whose own father was a sleeping car porter, emphasized the important work the Brotherhood did in 1954 and believes everyone should know this history. Only in the ‘60s did the Canadian government finally adopt the Canadian Immigration Act, which removed barriers to people from any country to become Canadians.

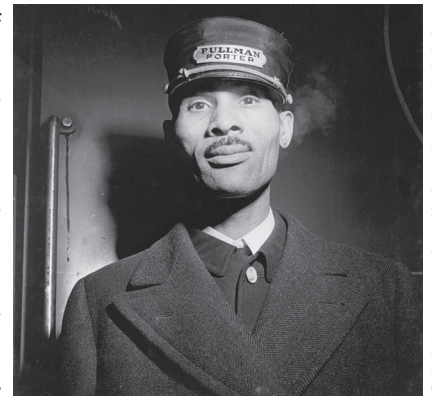


Photo of a Pullman Porter from Wikimedia Commons

In the early ‘70s, Canada adopted its Fair Employment Act to remove all discriminatory hiring practices. Jennings believes that highly significant parts of Canada’s history, including its movement to modernity, happened in large part thanks to the changes Blacks in Canada strove for. “When Black people make gains, we all benefit. We all make gains,” said Jennings, who drew a line connecting the activism of the Black porters to positive changes in Canada. We can celebrate Canada’s multiculturalism today thanks to the advocacy and unwavering commitment of many to their multicultural vision for our country.

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News for You

Telling Our Stories

Continued from the previous page

Dr Dorothy Williams introduced us to the word “Sankofa” from the Twi language of Ghana, in West Africa. It means to retrieve, to recover. She used it to describe the process Canadians must now follow. “It is not taboo to go back and fetch what you forget,” says Williams. People must go back to their roots before moving forward. Sankofa means recognizing the stories of the past to give meaning to the present.

Why teach Black history? According to Williams, we need to understand Sankofa to help our youth. The pandemic has brought isolation and a widening gap in development. We need to have targeted tools to build self-esteem. It is also important to reinforce a love for learning and understanding our society.

As a child, Williams did not see herself in the history she was taught. She once asked a teacher, “Where is the history of my ancestors?” The teacher answered, “You don’t have a history.” Her life’s work is to prove that statement wrong. She and others of diverse backgrounds do have a history. We need to recognize that they have a voice that must be incorporated in our collective history.



Williams’ childhood experiences led her to create, along with Linton Garner, the *ABC’s of Canadian Black History*, a teaching tool that helps educators explore Canadian Black history with their students. When she visited schools in the past, Williams noticed that teachers often used American/International Black heroes like Nelson

Mandela, Oprah Winfrey, and Michael Jordan during Black History Month. The story of Canadian Blacks was just not there, and the *ABC’s of Canadian Black History* addresses that problem. Available in both French and English, the kit can be adapted for both elementary and secondary classrooms. Williams has received feedback that adult learners also appreciate the *ABC’s of Canadian Black History*. For more information on this product, please visit the publisher’s website <https://blacbiblio.com/>.

Williams has also written a couple of books on the history of Montreal’s Black community. Published in 1989, *Blacks in Montreal, 1628-1986: An Urban Demography* looks at Black migration through the years and where Black Montrealers found a home in the city. Her second book, *The Road to Now: The History of Blacks in Montreal*, was published in 1997 and provides an in-depth look at how Blacks have fared in Montreal.

Like Williams, Linton Garner learned nothing about Black history in his school days. Also like Williams, Garner wants to ensure that children today grow up understanding Black history.

A past president of the Negro Community Centre and longtime community activist, Garner has been a member of the Consultative Committee for Inter-cultural and Inter-racial Relations for the City of Montreal. While serving on this committee, he successfully lobbied for Black History Month celebrations in Montreal.

Why have Black History Month? For Garner, the answer is simple. It is an opportunity for Black Canadians to tell their story and the foundation of who they are. It is a reminder for our society to recognize and value the contributions of all.



It is, indeed, time to hear the story of Black lives in Canada both today and throughout our country’s history. The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations would like to thank Marlene Jennings, Dorothy Williams, and Linton Garner for sharing their own stories and reminding us of the importance of recognizing the contributions of *all* Canadians to our country’s rich history.

Carol Meindl, *Executive Director*
Karen Henchey, *Communications Officer*

Dealing with Difficult People



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WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE EASIER TO GET ALONG WITH than others? Why are some a pleasure to work with and with others, it is more like pulling teeth? Everything seems to have to be a struggle. Why are some people “difficult”?

Psychologists have done a lot of research on this and the general opinion is that it all comes down to “fear.” Difficult people are afraid of something, be it a loss of power, a loss of control, a loss of credibility, or a fear of not getting what they want. It is important when dealing with difficult people to take a step back and consider what the problem may be. Instead of being judgmental, **be curious.**

Why are they acting this way? What are they afraid of? In the particular case of Home and School Associations, conflict can often be dismissed as a clash of personalities, but there is usually more to it than that. Often the difficult person is an individual who has been around for a long time, is used to running the show their way and is reluctant to give up that control. Sometimes it is because they are very proud of what they have created, know the hours and the struggle they put into it and can’t bear to see it dismantled and rebuilt another way, possibly not as successfully. They are afraid of losing their legacy.

There are four types of difficult people:

1. **The Bullying Person**
2. **The Chronically Angry Person**
3. **The Resistant Person**
4. **The Passive Aggressive Person**

Each type creates friction in its own way. The friction can stem from different insecurities and self-conditioning.

The true **bully**, the one who manipulates people and circumstances, who is pathological, is actually fairly rare. Most bullies are opportunistic and their behaviour is related to low emotional and social intelligence. They are less intentional about harming someone as they most

often act out of self-interest without sufficient regard for the impact of their actions. They often are not aware that their actions are considered bullying. This type of behaviour responds best to enlightenment. When their unacceptable behavior is pointed out to them, they are more likely to respond positively to the information. We can put the focus on the behaviour, not the individual, by pointing out a specific event. When you yourself are the one experiencing the bullying behavior, point out to the person how it is affecting the general functioning of the team, not just your personal feelings.

Another type of difficult person is the **chronically angry person.** The purpose of the person’s anger is to maintain control. It is to meet their needs, whatever they may be. Remember that feeling anger is normal and natural; it is what we do with it that is important. The chronically angry person has learned to handle all situations with anger as a means to always get what they want. Most people exist at an emotional baseline and anger escalates depending on their individual breaking point. Most people never hit the breaking point. There is never yelling, throwing things, etc. But for some individuals, they escalate quickly and hit their breaking points much sooner. After such a blowout, there is a recovery period where they can start to control themselves again and at the post-anger low, they are aware of what they have done and are often sorry for it. This is the best time to talk to the person about their behaviour. It is the time when they are most receptive to instruction.

The third type of difficult person is the **resistant person**—this is the person who says “no” to everything and resists change and innovation. The constant debating of ideas and issues often puts up roadblocks to progress. A positive aspect of the resistant person is that they can offer sober second thought. A negative aspect is that nothing ever changes. Resistance is often an articulated fear. Help them feel safe, help them save face. Bear in mind that it is psychologically difficult to change a “no” into a “yes.” You

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News for You

Dealing with Difficult People

Continued from the previous page

need to help them find what it is that they are resisting, what is missing that will help make them feel ready to move on. Help them re-frame the “no” into a deeper explanation of what the problem is. Get down to the fears. Find the mutual purpose and meet the needs, both yours and theirs.

The **passive aggressive person** feels unsafe about communicating directly or communicating their feelings. They wish to avoid conflict so they often say one thing to smooth over the immediate situation, but then later express a very different opinion. These people need to feel that it is safe to offer a negative or contrary opinion. It is important that all members are given the opportunity to speak their mind, in a safe and secure environment, without feeling attacked or resented.

To summarize, how you react to a difficult person can either escalate or deescalate a situation. Consider the following steps:

Get calm—shift judgment to curiosity: Be curious about why they are not complying with an agreed task.

Make it safe: Describe the situation and ask for their attention or interpretation. Paraphrase what they are saying to make it clear that you are listening and they know you understand what they are saying, or not.

Find a mutual purpose: Express your desire to meet their needs AND state yours directly through conversation, face to face.

Request a change: Note the pattern and invite them to act differently in the future.

Ultimately, patience and understanding are the keys to dealing with difficult people. If you are unable to deal with a difficult behaviour, ask another executive member to step up.

If you are dealing with a difficult person at your association or workplace and would like more tips on how to approach and defuse the situation, contact the QFHSA office by emailing info@qfhsa.org or calling 514-481-5619.



Photo from Adobe Stock

We would like to consider offering a “Lunch and Learn” event, open to all members, to help deal with volunteers in general and more specifically the difficult ones. Families, businesses, and volunteer organizations—we all flourish in an environment of mutual respect.

Carol Meindl, *Executive Director*

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE OPEN LIBRARY on English-Speaking Quebec

The Community Knowledge Open Library (CKOL) is a growing online resource created by the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN) at Concordia University. It was officially launched on March 10, 2022.

The CKOL currently contains over 1400 documents gathered from over 20 groups working with English-speaking communities in Quebec. This resource aims to increase awareness and understanding of English-speaking Quebec by expanding the knowledge base; preserving and disseminating material that is vulnerable to disappearance; and supporting the production of research and evidence-based policy using this material.

In 2021, the QFHSA deposited more than 290 scanned documents at the CKOL, including our resolutions from 1947-2016, our briefs from 1956-2016, and our *QFHSA News* newspaper/magazine from 1943-2018. This online library is open to the public and will provide a wealth of material for researchers and the curious going forward. If you want to know what briefs the QFHSA wrote in 1965 or what issues were of concern in the December 1980 issue of the *QFHSA News*, you can find the material in the CKOL!

To access the library, visit <https://ckol.quescren.ca/en/lib/>.

Taking Action: Local Home & School Initiatives to Protect and Preserve the Environment

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU WERE DOING on September 27th, 2019? For a lot of Montrealers, the answer is, "I attended the climate march." Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish climate activist, and about 500,000 people gathered in Montreal that day to demand real action on the climate emergency. Not six months later, our climate worries were eclipsed by another five-alarm emergency: the global pandemic. With the pandemic emergency slowly receding, it is time to refocus our attention on preserving and protecting our beloved planet.

The good news is that many of our students, schools, and local Home & School Associations have already been changing the way they do things and starting new initiatives to help our planet. At some schools, all environmental activities are led by teachers and student green teams and recycling crews. In other schools, Home & School volunteers and sometimes Governing Board committees play a major role.

One thing is clear, though, many local Home & School Associations are doing their part, either by introducing new environment-friendly practices themselves or supporting the school's efforts. Indeed, at the January regional council meetings and through our recent survey on the topic, the QFHSA learned the many things Home & Schools do to support the environment. A concern for our environment is shown in the way Home & Schools communicate, fundraise, run their events, and in the projects they take on. And where

the pandemic disrupted some green initiatives and practices, Home & Schools are keen to see their return.

Embracing the 3 R's: Reducing, Reusing, Recycling (and Composting too!)

It was wonderful to learn how much recycling has become part of everyday school life. Every Home & School that responded to our survey has a school recycling program. In some cases, the Home & School even got the program rolling by procuring the recycling bins from their city/municipality.



Photo from Adobe Stock

Composting is another feature of school life; 80% of the schools in our survey confirmed that they have compost bins. We also learned that Home & Schools are really using those bins! They are, for example, composting cardboard pizza boxes and other items from the lunchtime fundraisers. Children's World Academy has introduced the concept of boomerang lunches: Students bring everything back home from their lunches (leftovers, packaging, etc.) to be sorted by their families.

In addition to providing recycling and compost bins at their events, Home & Schools are reducing the amount of

single-use plastics/Styrofoam products used at the events. How is this achieved? By asking families to bring their own plates and cutlery; by using biodegradable utensils and recyclable cups; or by renting dishes/cutlery or using a "community dish-lending library." In addition, 40% of the Home & Schools in our survey have completely eliminated single-use water bottles at their events. At one of the regional council meetings, Home & Schools discussed the challenge of replacing the ubiquitous Styrofoam cup. They discussed using such alternatives as reusable glass cups, Mason jars, and recyclable cups that Home & Schools are finding online. (The last option takes some planning as the order needs to be made well in advance of an event.)

Home & Schools are also significantly reducing the amount of paper they use by opting for online order forms and fundraisers and by communicating with their membership electronically whenever possible. In fact, 45% of our survey respondents have gone completely paperless, and another 40% confirmed that most of their communications now happen electronically.

Several Home & Schools are also encouraging recycling within their school communities by organizing a *Super Recycleurs* visit. How this works: families drop off used clothing, linens, and toys in good condition to the school. The funds raised by Home & School are based on the weight of the items collected.

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News for You

Environmental Initiatives

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Out in Nature Part 1: Gardens, Butterflies, Birds, Bees, and Bats

If you pass a school in the spring or fall, there is a very good chance you will find students and adults hard at work in a garden. School gardens are indeed very popular: 85% of the schools represented in our survey have one.



An amphibian's life at La Tuque



Planting time at La Tuque

How do these gardens come to be? Sometimes they are started by the Home & School Association with the collaboration of the teachers. More often it seems to be a school initiative, as is the case at Birchwood, where the school funded the garden's construction. In addition, a grant from Farm to School Canada supported Birchwood's garden initiatives and allowed the school to purchase a Nutritower (an indoor hydroponic garden).

Even with school-led garden projects, Home & Schools lend a hand by building the garden boxes, providing plants or seeds, supplying parent volunteers, and raising funds for the project. At École Primaire Beaconsfield, parent volunteers also take care of the pollinator-rich flower beds at the school's entrance.



Making seed tapes at La Tuque

We also learned from local associations how the garden project enriches school life. Teachers incorporate garden units in their curricula, where students learn about plants and insects. At some schools, students make soup from the harvest.



Time to make soup at La Tuque

At La Tuque, the chicken noodle soup made with garden vegetables was sold as a fundraiser for the library. The gardens are allowing students to deepen their understanding of the foods they eat and the natural world. For Home & Schools, organizing or supporting this initiative is time well spent as they see how much the students benefit from the experience.

In some school communities, you will also find bat shelters, birdhouses, butterfly gardens, and rooftop beehives.

Fundraising with the Environment in Mind

How do you fundraise while staying mindful of the environment? Here are some tips from local Home & Schools:

- **Use minimal paper** (online order forms; orders from a website)
- **Use limited packaging and eco-friendly packaging** (craft paper for wrapping, etc.)
- **Sell eco-friendly products** (Laundry strips (*Tru Earth*), dryer balls, natural soaps (*Hudson Soap Co.*), beeswax wrap, bamboo products (*OLA Bamboo*), reusable tote bags)
- **Sell seeds and plants** (*Make it Sow, Plantables*)
- **Keep it local:** use local suppliers as much as possible

Out in Nature Part 2: Activities and Events

How do you spark a love and appreciation of our natural world in children and youth? By giving them opportunities to get out of doors and see just how special our planet is and how important it is to protect it. Home & Schools are finding ways to help here too by supporting amazing projects. At La Tuque, Forest Hill Jr, and Sherbrooke Academy, Home & School supports the schools' outdoor classrooms where students play, exercise, and learn.

If you pass Beacon Hill Elementary during tulip season, you will find a

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Environmental Initiatives

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beautiful tulip garden in the shape of the Canadian flag. Originally created to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday, the garden is tended by parents and volunteers from the community. New bulbs are purchased by Home & School each year to replace the ones that fed the local squirrel population.

Home & Schools organize events and fundraisers that strengthen our attachment to the natural world. There are Earth Day activities and hunts for pumpkins on school grounds or nearby forests. There are "Adopt-a-Tree" fundraisers, something that both Laval Junior and Sherbrooke Academy have organized. Lunchtime enrichment activities encourage students to learn about science and nature and have fun in the outdoors. For families, Home & Schools are organizing outdoor scavenger hunts, 1000-Hour challenges (where families aim to spend 1000 hours out of doors in 2022), and more.

At a time when our beleaguered planet seems to be reeling from one crisis to another, it is heartening to learn of our Home & Schools' dedica-



Outdoor classrooms at Forest Hill Jr (above) and La Tuque (below)



tion to the environment. Not only are Home & Schools doing what they can to mitigate the environmental impact of their activities, they are promoting positive change, and are eager to do more. Without exception, every Home & School that answered our survey is interested in learning about external grants/funding available to augment their green initiatives. Nurturing a love and respect for the environment in our school communi-

ties is a noble cause—and absolutely essential for the preservation of our planet. Thank you to our local associations for all that you do!

Karen Henchey,
Communications Officer

Green Grants Received!

***Beurling Academy
Macdonald High School
John Rennie High School
Pierrefonds Community
High School***

Congratulations to Beurling Academy, Macdonald High, John Rennie High, and Pierrefonds High of the Lester B. Pearson School Board. All four schools received \$5000 Green Grants from the Ministry of Education, as part of the special project, *Projets jeunesse en changements climatiques 2021-2022*.

We are looking forward to hearing about your amazing projects!



Going Green at Pierrefonds High School

In an effort to reduce our overall waste at Pierrefonds Community High School (PCHS), we have started to compost by collecting food waste during the lunch period. Collection buckets have been placed on tables throughout the cafeteria with labels indicating what can be composted. Students from the WOTP 3 group, an alternative learning program at PCHS, empty these buckets into larger bins that get emptied once a week by the Pierrefonds Borough. To raise awareness, posters have been put up throughout the school and more information is shared on social media and in daily announcements. During warmer months, we will empty the collection buckets into our own compost bins beside our vegetable garden. This will allow us to create our own compost, which will be used in the garden as a soil amendment.

Susan Stacho, *Pierrefonds Community High School*

Very Belated Saint Valentine's Day Messages for Monsieur Roberge, Madame Charest, and Madame McCann *The Ministers of Education, for Education, and of Higher Education of Québec*

A Commentary By Brian Rock

"The principal goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply what other generations have done."

— Jean Piaget

I HAVE GATHERED THIS WISHLIST from amongst the Saint Valentine's Day cards that students in our schools—at the elementary, secondary, CEGEP, and university levels—would like to send to you, if only they knew who you were, and how to deliver their wishes to you.

On graduation from Secondary V, every student in this province would love to be bilingual and bi-cultural with a balanced view of history, the required knowledge in mathematics, science, and technologies, and the critical thinking skills necessary to be an involved member of the society of the 21st century.

How can we accomplish this linguistic-cultural dream? You already have the means within the present system to put in place what would be the envy of every other educational jurisdiction.

In every elementary school across the province, starting in Elementary Cycle III Year I (Grade 5), half the classes have instruction in French, the other half in English, in all subjects for five straight months. Franco-phone teachers teaching in French,

and Anglophone teachers teaching in English. Teachers swap classes for the last five months of the school year. This also continues through Elementary Cycle III, Year 2 (Grade 6).

We should also promote *la culture Québécoise* by making available grants for cultural outings in the language of instruction. It is the ideal opportunity to showcase our talented Québécois artists—both Franco-phone and Anglophone—in the fields of song, music, dance, theatre, comedy, crafts, and related disciplines.



Photo from Adobe Stock

It is time, Ministers, to raise the age for compulsory education to 18 years of age. It will allow our graduating students to be on an equal footing with those of surrounding educational jurisdictions. It will be necessary to expand the quality and offering of technical vocational programs at the senior secondary and college levels of instruction across the province.

How are we going to solve the shortage of qualified teachers in our classrooms?

1. By improving the working conditions of the teachers.



2. By ensuring teachers receive fair salaries that are not near the bottom of the provincial and territorial averages.
3. By installing a meaningful system of consultation that actually provides for meeting with teachers and discussing and debating the important issues underlying the principles of what is actually taught to students.
4. By allowing for a Quebec College of Teachers.
5. By financing more spaces in the Bachelor of Education degree programs in all Quebec faculties of education.
6. By returning to offering the one-year pedagogical diploma to the faculties of education for holders of Bachelor's degrees of teachable subjects for preschool, elementary, secondary, and CEGEP teachers as well as university professors.

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Belated Valentine's Messages

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Tackle the issue of bullying and violence in our educational institutions head on. Put in place the financial resources necessary to hire more professional personnel to address the issues and provide the necessary follow up.

Provide additional financial resources to hire more professional employees to reduce the time of delivery from the initial diagnosis to the delivery of services to students with learning disabilities.

And, finally, seek more input from student representatives at the senior secondary, CEGEP, and university levels. On the boards of directors of the educational institutions, school service centres, and school boards, ensure seats for elected student representatives provide full voting rights and the privileges of proposing and seconding motions and engaging in meaningful participation in discussions and debates.

Monsieur Roberge, Madame Charrest, and Madame McCann: Please take the above suggestions under advisement, and consider implementing them as early as possible for

an improved system of education for the students of Québec.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– Nelson Mandela

Brian Rock, B.A., M.Ed., is a retired school principal and secondary teacher of the history of Quebec. A QFHSA past president, Brian serves on the QFHSA Board of Directors and co-chairs the QFHSA Resolutions Subcommittee.

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



Remembering Georgie Alice Crawford, 1934-2021, and William Holt, 1947-2021

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations was saddened to learn of the passing of Georgie Alice Crawford and William Holt. Both passed away on December 13, 2021.

“Working with children gave her energy and music was the canvas of her life.” These were the words the family of **Georgie Alice Crawford** used to describe her amazing life. A teacher and fine arts consultant in the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal and later the English Montreal School Board, Crawford is fondly remembered as the founder of the Children’s Chorus, which remains active to this day. A recipient of Queen Elizabeth II’s Golden Jubilee Medal, Crawford lent a hand to many important causes and organizations throughout her life. In addition to her work in choral music, she was an active volunteer with the Montreal Council of Women, Delta Kappa Gamma, and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations remembers Georgie Crawford as the inspiring founder of *Le goût de lire communautaire/Community Born to Read*, a project very close to our hearts.

In mid December, the flags at the former Lindsay Place High School (now St. Thomas) flew at half mast in honour of **William Holt**, a teacher whose generosity and deep appreciation of his students have left lasting memories for many. Holt spent his entire teaching career at Lindsay Place High, where he taught at both the junior and senior levels. Through all those years, he was a tireless champion for the school’s at-risk students. His dedication to vulnerable students was such that he donated the royalties of the textbook on Canadian History he wrote to help students in financial need. This is a perfect example of the kindness and dedication of this remarkable educator.

In 2002, the Quebec Federation of Home and Schools Associations presented William Holt with the Gordon Paterson Award, an honour given to an outstanding educator devoted to the education of children and the participation of parents. It was an award he richly deserved.

The QFHSA salutes Georgie Alice Crawford and William Holt for their years of dedicated service to the Quebec education system and their communities.

Dawson College and the Canada/Quebec Entente: An Ongoing Saga

IT SEEMS THAT HISTORY CONTINUES TO REPEAT ITSELF, and true progress is slow... Two steps forward and one step back.

For instance, in 1979, QFHSA parents adopted a resolution at their Annual General Meeting in support of Dawson College. The resolution was as follows:

WHEREAS it is widely recognized that Dawson College, being the largest CEGEP in the Province of Quebec, provides education for the many graduates of the high schools of this province, and WHEREAS Dawson College provides an active program of adult education for the benefit of all residents of Quebec and WHEREAS this same college maintains a high standard of instruction in spite of severe physical restraints and limitations, and WHEREAS this standard of education will only be maintained if funds are made available from the Department of Education, and WHEREAS sums of money have been promised to Dawson College from public funds over a number of years, but have recently been withheld by the Minister of Education,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations deploras the action of the Minister of Education in withholding funds which were promised by the government, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations requests the Minister of Education to release immediately such funds as have been promised to Dawson College.

Sound familiar?

Back in 1979, the CEGEP system was still relatively new, having been established in 1968 in Quebec. Even then, Dawson, as an English educational institution, was often on the receiving end of mean-spiritedness by the Ministry of Education. Fast forward 43 years and we still see the Ministry promising money to Dawson and then changing its mind for political gain. The Ministry seems to believe that providing English-speaking institutions

the funds they need to thrive will mean it has to withhold funds from French-language educational institutions. But is this really the case?

Following the Money

The reality is that the federal government provides financial support for minority language education: for French education in the greater part of Canada and English education in Quebec. The QFHSA has remained dogged in its determination to track these federal funds.



Photo from Shutterstock

In 1970, the federal government set up a special fund to promote bilingualism. In 1970-71, out of a total of \$50 million for this purpose, more than \$29 million was received by the Department of Education in Quebec. The terms covering those federal grants did not allow for the funds to be used in Quebec for the teaching of French in the English sector. The QFHSA requested that the federal government modify the conditions under which the grants were made so that they could be available for the teaching in both English and French-speaking sectors for the teaching of French and English, respectively.

In 1976, the QFHSA continued to “follow the money”: Quebec received \$112.8 million from the federal government under the formula that 9% of those funds were intended to cover supplementary costs of minority language schools (English in Quebec). Under the law,

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Dawson College

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English-speaking students had an obligation to obtain a working knowledge of French in order to graduate from high school, yet the quality of general education for English-speaking students at that time was being compromised in order to emphasize French teaching and curriculum development. Again, sound familiar?

The QFHSA felt that the basic cost of education was the responsibility of the province, yet there appeared to be little evidence that the federal funding for minority language costs was being used to the benefit of our schools. The reason? The Quebec government could not accept that minority language could cost more. The QFHSA resolved to write and present a brief that demonstrated that there was indeed a need for that 9% in grant funding for supplementary costs in Quebec's English schools. Further, in its resolution, the QFHSA demanded that the funds be allocated to minority language schools.



Photo from Adobe Stock

The QFHSA's Committee for Bilingualism Grants wrote and submitted a brief that outlined a clear process for the disbursement of the federal funds. The brief set out the following: clear guidelines for the province for the application of the funds; a requirement that proof or demonstration (by audit) that the disbursement of the funds conformed to the guidelines provided to the Quebec government; and an appeal to the federal government to accept the proposed process, making it a prerequisite for the granting of funds.

By 1980, the QFHSA was still requesting the federal government require accountability from the provinces on the distribution of federal grants for the purpose of minority language education as a condition for the release of public funds.

Since the inception of the Official Languages in Education Program in 1970, the Government of Canada has contributed almost \$12.5 billion to the provinces in support of minority and second language education. That money was transferred into provincial general revenue accounts. It has been next to impossible for the QFHSA to have an accounting of the monies transferred to Quebec. Other provinces have had similar experiences.

In 1987, 1988, and 1991, the QFHSA continued to call for accountability. Each province negotiated its own bilateral agreement with the federal government for financial assistance in support of education in the minority official language of that province and for opportunities for Canadians to learn their second official language. As a result, there is not a set standard for disclosure shared by all the provinces.

The QFHSA requested that a minimum standard of disclosure be agreed upon by the provinces to ensure the funds furnished by the federal government for support of education in the minority official language were reported in that context and that the accountability reports be subject to overview by a federal parliamentary committee. Of the \$3 billion invested by the federal government to the provinces between 1989 and 1993, \$327.8 million had gone to the Canada/Quebec Agreement.

In 2020-21, \$64 million was transferred to Quebec: About \$42 million for minority language and about \$23 million for second languages. Of that \$23 million, roughly \$4 million was allocated for French as a second language, and \$18 million for English as a second language.

The Quebec government has never allowed itself to be bound to transparency and accountability clauses (including for linguistic clauses, which tend to appear—when they exist—in the preamble to agreements). The “Canada-Quebec Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction 2014-2015 to 2017-2018” has been extended three times: to cover the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 fiscal years.

Quebec and Canada have yet to sign an intergovernmental services agreement on the provision of services in English because Quebec will not sign the accountability provisions, and to the QFHSA's knowledge, there is no federal paper trail to follow. It remains to be seen if funds for minority languages are indeed being allocated to our minority English schools. The QFHSA Rights Subcommittee continues to investigate.

Carol Meindl,
Executive Director

Membership Services – The Latest News

Hitting the Home Stretch

Is Your Home and School in Good Standing? All Home & School Associations have received emails or “snail mail” letters listing outstanding items. We are now in the “home stretch” of the school year and if your association is in arrears, your Home and School **may not** be eligible for insurance coverage for your end-of-year events.

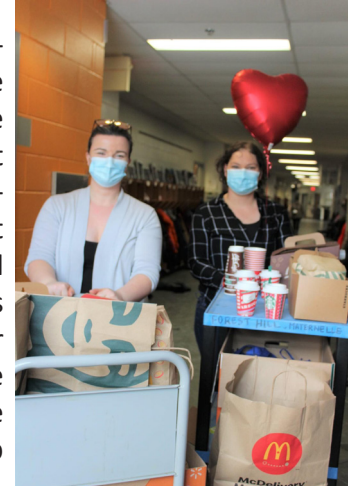
Insurance for Events: The QFHSA office needs 10 business days to process requests, especially in the month of June. The insurance forms are on the QFHSA website under the “Forms” tab. Please email them to info@qfhsa.org. Note that the QFHSA insurance no longer covers inflatable games, *Jungle Sport*, etc. Have the school book the vendor and sign the contract. Your Home and School can reimburse the school at a later date.

Updating the Constitution and By-Laws (C&B): When updating your association’s C&B there is often a 4 to 6 week notice period that must be respected. Members need time to look at the proposed changes and ask questions. Now is the time to discuss amendments to these operational documents.

Recruiting Executive Members: Which executive positions are coming up for election? Does your association have a succession plan or nominations committee? Send out the job descriptions to your members or to the school population (if possible). Interested volunteers need time to get more information before the Home and School AGM and elections.

Attention Presidents and Treasurers: Use the 2021-2022 reports due to the QFHSA as the base for AGM reports to Home and School members or the school population at large. Brag about what Home and School was able to accomplish this school year despite restrictions.

The Hand-Over: In 2021-2022, some new executive members were left in the lurch, that is, they did not have any knowledge of documents due to the QFHSA at the beginning of the school year. Now that restrictions have relaxed, make time for the 2021-2022 executive members to meet with the new team and bring them up to speed.



Organizing a coffee break at Forest Hill Jr

Welcoming New Parents: Try and reach out to kindergarten or grade seven parents even if you are meeting on Zoom. Invite them to observe at least part of your May/June meeting.

Marlyn Brownrigg, *Membership Services Coordinator*
marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org; 514-481-5619

I am looking for a supplier...

The QFHSA Think Tank Facebook Group: A Great Place to Share Tips and Ideas

Do you know about the QFHSA Think Tank on Facebook? This private group was started by a local Home & School Association to give our community a forum to ask questions, share fundraising and event information, and more.

If you aren't already a member of the group, visit <https://bit.ly/3IPkAwI> and request to join today!

What fundraisers are working well for you?

How do you recruit new members?

What events are you planning?

Focus on the Locals

In the **Focus on the Locals** section, we share news and information from our local associations. **Thank you to all of the Home and Schools that contributed to this issue.** We would love to hear from your Home and 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@gfhsa.org.

At Forest Hill Jr: Making Staff Appreciation a Year Long Celebration

Staff appreciation at Forest Hill Junior looked different in 2020-2021. Because of the COVID situation, we ended up holding events outside in the month of May. This school year, we decided to implement an altogether different concept to keep up with the ever-changing times once again. Instead of keeping with the traditional Staff Appreciation Week, we decided to stretch the love over the entire year to keep morale high and the surprises fresh! We surprise the staff with mini monthly events to keep spirits up. The results of this new concept have been phenomenal!

We developed a theme for the entire year: **“Our Staff Is Punderful.”** In November, we officially launched with our first fun pun: **“We donut know what we would do without you!”** The event was sponsored by Claudia Escudero and Steven Williams of M Immobilier. We served coffee and Krispy Kreme donuts to all the staff on a Thursday morning, and it warmed the hearts of all!



In December, Dominos Pizza in Vaudreuil sponsored our **“You have a pizza my heart!”** Luncheon. The staff appreciation committee set up a holiday feast in the staff room complete with a Christmas tree adorned with personalized ornaments for each staff member to celebrate the occasion!



In January, we spoiled the staff with a coffee break in the afternoon and Nivea treated the entire staff with a gift bag of nourishing body products as we **“Spread the love”** for our Forest Hill Junior staff.

In February, Moushi co-sponsored our **“We have a bowl lot of love for you, ‘cause you dessert it”** staff lunch!



The Forest Hill Junior staff has certainly been feeling the love from our community! We look forward to continuing this new tradition for the rest of the 2021-2022 school year and coming up with new and awesome puns to celebrate the staff and provide pick me ups, smiles, and surprises for all!

Submitted by Cris Baluch, Forest Hill Junior Home and School



Anchors Away!

St. Paul's Home & School Take Staff on a
"Cruise" Full of Culinary Delights



THE APPRECIATION CRUISE

Itinerary

DAY 1 – Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Welcome to THE MIDDLE EAST
Enjoy a traditional Middle Eastern mint tea, infused water, healthy treats, and baked goods.
Treat yourself with our home spa products.

DAY 2 – Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Welcome to THE MEDITERRANEAN
Enjoy a delicious Greek lunch followed by a traditional Greek treat.
Enjoy the special treat we have for you too!

DAY 3 – Thursday, February 10, 2022

Welcome to THE BRITISH ISLES
Enjoy a delicious continental breakfast featuring healthy parfaits, coffee, bagels, cream cheese, and croissants.
Afternoon tea will be served accompanied by baked treats.

DAY 4 – Friday, February 11, 2022

Welcome BACK HOME to ST. PAUL STAFF
Enjoy a welcome-back lunch.
Share your cruise photos!
A special surprise of kitchen gifts awaits our returning travellers.

*St. Paul's staff enjoyed sailing on the maiden voyage of the **Appreciation Cruise** and all the treats and special gifts included on the journey. The cruise was a fun opportunity for St. Paul Home & School to thank staff members and show our appreciation for everything they do for our children, the school, and our St. Paul community.*

*Submitted by Melissa Cambareri,
St. Paul Home and School*

Spring Update from St. Charles

Basketball coach John Wooden once said, **“If we fail to adapt, we fail to move forward.”** If the last two years have taught us anything, it is how to adapt and find new ways to achieve our goals. We at St. Charles have been very lucky to have the support of our principal, staff, and community to adapt and change as needed. We are also very happy that we have been able to get back to a little bit of normality this year with the return of some of our much-loved activities. Students were just as happy as parents when pizza and Dagwood’s lunches were brought back in late fall.

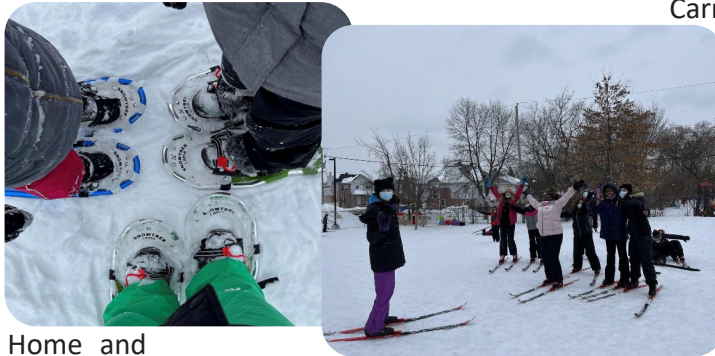
Big Bang Update

Every year, St. Charles Home and School holds a Big Bang fundraiser. This usually happens during the Welcome Back BBQ in September, but for the second year in a row we held the event online and in November due to the pandemic.

This year, we decided to change things up and found an innovative way to run the event. We used two electronic wheels: one held the names of all the participants; the other held photos of the prizes. When a prize was selected, the photo was visible to everyone. For a \$10 ticket, participants received a prize ranging in value from \$25 to \$350. The event was a huge success! Home and School gathered a record 237 prizes and raised \$2380 for the school. We can’t wait to do it all again next year!

Busy Winter Days

Despite the restrictions, St. Charles students had an action packed winter season. Our enthusiastic physical education teachers brought the Winter on Wheels program to the school. For two weeks, students enjoyed cross-country skiing and snowshoeing—a great initiative to get our kids moving and give them a fantastic winter experience.



In February, St. Charles explored the themes of Black History and anti-bullying. Students in every grade read inspirational books to celebrate Black History Month, and the Grade 6 classes also participated in a virtual workshop on prejudice and how our words can affect others with author D’iana Bélice.

At St. Charles, we have our very own ABC Crew (Anti-Bullying Crew),



a group of students empowering their peers to lead with kindness and acceptance. The team helped the school recognize the importance of taking action against bullying on Pink Shirt Day (February 23).

Carnival Day

Sometimes good things are worth waiting for, and that was true when it came to our Breakfast with Santa/Carnival Day. In December, we were very much looking forward to welcoming Santa to breakfast, but the virus had different plans. Thankfully, we were able to convert the event to “Breakfast in our PJs,” a celebration held the Friday before Spring Break. The Grade 6 elves did a great job delivering food and little gifts to the classes. They then stayed to help the younger grades play Bingo. The 24 Bingo winners each received a \$10 Indigo gift card.

As we anticipate the arrival of spring, we look forward to celebrating the wonderful St. Charles staff during Staff Appreciation Week in April; our Grade 6 grads in June; and the end of the year with footloose activities. We also plan to fit in another St. Charles clothing sale!

After a year of not being in the school, we are grateful to be back in the building to see the smiles on the children’s faces and hear the laughter in the halls.

*Submitted by
Donna Coelho and Julianne Read,
St. Charles Home and School*

Focus on the Locals

We're Having Fun at Baie-Comeau High School!

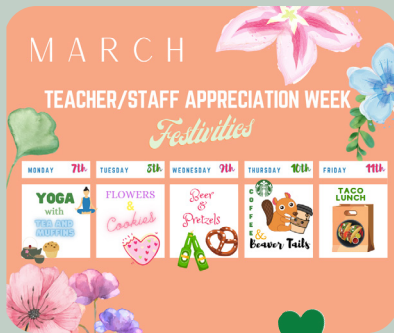
On Friday, March 25th, Baie-Comeau High School had a day full of outdoor activities. It started with a special Pizza Royal lunch for all and continued with an afternoon at "le Parc des pionniers." Sliding and skating were in the spotlight. We ended the perfect day with hot chocolate (using the secret recipe of Mr. Eric Comeau) and fireside chats in the school yard, under the supervision of Mr. Simon Cloutier.



Submitted by Richard Gaudet, Baie-Comeau High School



March Merriment at St. Patrick's *Celebrating our Teachers and Staff with Food and Fun*



St Patrick students and their families have expressed their love and appreciation for our amazing teachers, staff, administrators, and aids. Our TSAW (Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week) was a smash hit! The Home & School provided treats and meals all throughout the second week in March. Our staff found that the timing, just after spring break, was terrific for morale and gave them a reason *other than our amazing kids ;)* to show up smiling each day.



Submitted by Mimi Tabaczuk, St. Patrick Home and School



Shamrock illustration from Adobe Stock

Focus on the Locals

Forest Hill Senior: Escaping the Ordinary...



A magical and festive atmosphere touched Forest Hill Senior Campus in Saint-Lazare on the week of February 14 to 18, 2022. Led by two parents on our Staff Appreciation Committee, this year's Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week was a celebration of all our staff, who dedicate time and energy, day after day, to offer a safe, pleasant, and motivating learning place to students in Grades 3 to 6.

all staff members received a grazing box and participated in an amazing raffle. They also received a sweet treat and more gifts to bring home. Last but not least, **on Friday**, each member of our amazing staff team received a little surprise the day before March Break: Cookies, fruits, brownies, and more—all in recognition of their hard work and dedication to our school.

With the theme, "Escape from the Ordinary," this year's celebrations were truly a collaborative effort of the entire Saint-Lazare community. Thanks to the contributions of local businesses and our volunteers, we were able to organize catered meals, snacks, gifts, decorations, new school decor, and many other surprises all week long for our amazing 65 school staff members.



A total of 54 businesses generously contributed items and gifts for the wonderful school and daycare team of Forest Hill Senior. Local businesses did not hesitate for a minute to support the cause. Our sponsors shared words of encouragement and support along with their own special memories of Forest Hill—the days when their now-adult children were students.

The Forest Hill Senior Home & School Association would like to thank the parents who made a monetary contribution to help celebrate our team; the families who took the time to write a note or create a drawing for their beloved staff members; the generous sponsors; and the school's administration team, who helped our little elves work their magic.

*Submitted by Josée-Ann Moisan and Jennifer Percy,
Staff Appreciation Week Committee,
Forest Hill Sr Home and School*

On Monday, the celebrations began with a Valentine's Day treat, staff bathroom makeovers, and personalized "thank you" notes from the students. **On Tuesday**, the school team was welcomed with a coffee break and a gift bag filled with gift certificates and health products. **On Wednesday**, Spa Day, a healthy breakfast was offered, followed by more gifts and a catered lunch. **On Thursday**,



SHARE YOUR NEWS!



Photo by Anissa Thompson from FreemImages

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

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