



THE VOICE OF  
THE PARENT  
IN EDUCATION

# QFHSA NEWS

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WINTER 2015

## Read to your child before they are born

By Hugh Maynard



A newborn baby can only see approximately 1 foot in front of its face. Therefore, sound is the key to recognition for the first few months of an infant's life. By reading to your unborn child, and continuing to do so throughout its early years, you lay the foundation for learning and literacy, which is so important for human development.

"Humans are designed for language"

said Lawrence DePoe, a panel speaker at the "Literacy: Today's Challenges" workshop during the QFHSA Fall Conference. "American babies will learn Mandarin. Children will learn any language."

DePoe, an Early Childhood Educator and former President of QFHSA, was joined by Linda Shohet, Founder of The Centre For Literacy, to talk to parents about some of the important aspects surrounding literacy, education and early childhood development. With many of the parents in the audience having children in immersion or bilingual programs, language and literacy was a topic of much interest.

Having books read to newborns, DePoe said, helps children move their vocabulary from the 20 words in the first year, all the way up to the 10,000 words of what they will eventually use as an adult. Books he pointed out, have a story, plot, sequence and structure; all things that children respond to, and enjoy as a learning activity. But he cautioned about equating the reading of books to a child, to their ability to read.

In Finland, which consistently has amongst the top results in education around the world, schools don't teach reading until the students are seven years old. It's not until around Grade 1 or 2, that the brain is ready to read. Before that, DePoe noted, reading is difficult.

Linda Shohet, who is considered one of Canada's leading experts on literacy, jumped right in where DePoe left off asking the audience, "Are we hurting our children if they don't read

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Make sure to visit our website regularly to get information about upcoming events. It is a great resource for membership forms & documents, constitution & by-laws, QFHSA Strategic Plan, back issues of the NEWS, past briefs written by the QFHSA and valuable partner links and resources.

# A primer on the democratic rights of parents in English schools in Quebec



There are three organizations in s schools, in with which parents can become involved!

**GOVERNING BOARD (GB):** At the schools' General Assembly of Parents in September, parents may be elected as one of the Parent Representatives on the Governing Board. At the first meeting of the Governing Board in October, parents are eligible to be elected as one of the two Community Representatives on the Governing Board. (Consult sections: 42 to 47 of Education Act, chapter I -13.3)

**PARENT PARTICIPATION ORGANIZATION (PPO):** Also at the schools' General Assembly of Parents in September, parents may decide by- upon a majority vote, to have a Parent Participation Organization and elect members. Parent Participation Organizations have a specific mandate. (Consult sections: 96 to 96.4 of Education Act)

**LOCAL HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (H&S):** At any time during the school year, parents of any school in Quebec may decide to have a Home and School Association. Upon their decision, parents petition the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. (QFHSA) to be approved as a local Home and School Association. The QFHSA has letters patents, a provincial charter issued by the Government of Quebec, and receives funding from the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research of Quebec.

96 years ago, the first Home and School meeting of parents, educators and community leaders in Quebec, was held in 1919 at Macdonald High School in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. 25 years later, in 1944, the QFHSA launched 45 local associations at Westmount Junior High School in Westmount. (Consult: The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc.: A His tory of Achievement. May, 2015)

**A Big Thank You To Our Major Funders:** The Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage; Government of Quebec through the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research; and of course, our devoted members!

**Congratulations To:** Ms. Jennifer Maccarone and Ms. Suanne Stein Day on their recent elections as President and Vice-President of the Quebec English School Boards Association; and Ms. Rhonda Boucher and Mr. Mike Nalecz as President and Vice-President of the English Parents' Committee Association. QFHSA looks forward to continuing to work closely with both associations!

Yours In Education,

Brian Rock

## QFHSA 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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3285 Cavendish Blvd., Suite #560

Montreal, Quebec H4B 2L9

Phone: (514) 481-5619 • 1-888-808-5619

Fax: (514) 481-5610

Email: [news@qfhsa.org](mailto:news@qfhsa.org)

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# A message from the Executive Director



The QFHSA is setting various challenges for our member associations this year!

Marlene Jennings, Chair of the Election Systems Study Panel and Keynote Speaker at this year's Fall Conference, threw out a challenge to us all. The Election Systems Study Panel conducted research on the school board election system, and came with the valid suggestions on how to improve it. We need to voice our concerns over the plan to eliminate and replace the current democratic process of school board elections, with appointing regional administrative boards in their stead.

It is now up to us to write to our MNAs to voice our desire to see these suggestions implemented. The QFHSA will draft a letter, which can be used as a template. We encourage all our members to adapt this letter and mail it off to your legislative representatives. The investment of the 77¢ would be well spent!

This QFHSA NEWS Winter Issue, will give ideas on ways to help enhance the education and well-being of our students.

**National Health and Fitness Day:** In the same spirit, we will encourage Home and Schools to help launch Participaction's National Health and Fitness Day. An official nationally recognized initiative to get Canadians moving by marking one day- the first Saturday in June (June 4, 2016), as the day when all Canadians get out and get active. We believe that Home and School can play a lead role in initiating it, and would like to see this become an annual event for all schools in Quebec! (See article page 16, or go to [www.participaction.com/national-health-and-fitness-day](http://www.participaction.com/national-health-and-fitness-day))

**Build Our Kids Success (BOKS):** We will be asking our member associations to explore the possibility of introducing the BOKS morning physical activity program before class, at their school. This is an excellent opportunity for fitness minded Home and School parents to play an active role in providing this beneficial program to students. To motivate interest for your members, a representative from BOKS can be invited to give a presentation. (For more information on BOKS see article on page 11, or go to <https://www.bokskids.org/about-boks>)

**Volunteer Matters:** Volunteer Matters, is series of workshops that will be coming to an area near some of you next year. It will give you ideas on how to revitalize and retain your volunteers, through participation. The QFHSA will be partnering with the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network to help bring this opportunity to all our Home and School associations.

Many exciting projects to become involved with! Until then...Enjoy the Christmas/Chanukah holidays! Come back energized for the New Year.



# Membership Services

**New Home and School Associations:** The QFHSA would like to extend a warm welcome to two (2) new Home and School Associations in the Sir Wilfred Laurier School Board – St. Vincent’s Elementary and Mountainview Elementary!

**By-Laws Template:** The QFHSA’s by-laws template was presented at the November 7<sup>th</sup> Fall Conference. Many thanks to the workshop participants and the summer focus group who provided us with their comments. As a result of the discussions, the document will be fine-tuned and then the template will be posted on the QFHSA website. There will also be a few minor changes to the Constitution template. Home and School presidents will be advised of the changes via a QFHSA *Mailbag*.

**Paperwork, Paperwork, Paperwork:** Fall conference is over and reminders about outstanding documentation will soon be sent to the local associations. All forms, reports and the first batch of membership fees and the list are **NOW DUE**.

**No, Sports Are Not Covered:** Please remember that sports after-school activities are not covered by the QFHSA’s 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability insurance (damages only). If you want more information please call the QFHSA office.

**Work-to-Rule:** Some Home and School Associations have had to change or postpone their activities to conform to the work-to-rule constraints and limitations. Thank you for your flexibility and ability to adapt during this school year.

Take some time off during the holiday season to relax with your family. Happy Holidays!

Marlyn Brownrigg  
QFHSA Membership  
Services Coordinator



Playtesting with Kids

At Tribal Nova we are passionate about developing great educational games for children. We are constantly looking for parents and children to help us playtest apps and digital games to improve our products.

- Play test sessions last 1h
- Sessions are held at our office on St-Laurent/Rachel
- Children receive a \$25 gift card for participating

If you and your child are interested, please send an email to [usertesting@tribalnova.com](mailto:usertesting@tribalnova.com) or scan the QR code:



## QFHSA welcomes Charlene!



We want to welcome Charlene McFarlane, our new Administrative Office Assistant!

Charlene has a wide range of experience in Administration, Public Relations, Marketing and Graphic Design, working with non-profits, start-ups and established businesses.

In her early career, she also worked as a Compulsory Program Educator at our Royal Vale Elementary Home and School, developing a self-esteem program for girls "Just As I Am" She also developed a monthly network for single mothers "I Know I Can!".

This past spring 2015, she was voted Single Mother of The Year by Woman On Fire based in Toronto, for single mothers running a full or part time business.

**The winner of the Kidcon tickets at Executive Workshops was Laura Abbatiello of Edinburgh Elementary School**

## NEW!: A family treasure can be a family recipe

- As they often overlap, this year we are combining the two essay projects into one. A family recipe can be a family treasure, and family treasure can be a family recipe! This will be a wonderful project for a Home and School to take on.
- Gather traditional, cultural or special recipes, family pictures and plan a potluck! A great introduction to experience different foods and traditions, and an opportunity for the student's parents to meet each other as well.
- Have the Grade 7 class students get involved, as a means to getting to know each other and appreciate each other's culture and diversity.
- Gather the stories and family pictures from your students (perhaps the Grade 6 or Grade 11 class). Put them together in a booklet. Students can carry it forward with them as a family treasure long after elementary or high school. Associations can also give a copy of the booklets, to the school library for future classes to read and be inspired!



## An open letter to Premier Couillard

Eight institutions that represent Anglophones in Quebec have sent an open letter to Premier Philippe Couillard asking for more funding for English schools. Here is a copy of that letter. Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations is one of the undersigned.

*Premier Couillard,*

*We are organizations, institutions, parents and citizens who have a vested interest and desire to preserve a vibrant English community in Quebec. Like you, we are engaged in and committed to the development of our communities and Quebec as a whole.*

*We are concerned about the erosion of quality public education in our province. We see that students requiring professional support do not receive the necessary help to succeed due to sustained cuts to the education system. We also see that this reality places a heavy burden on the entire school system.*

*English schools have a unique place in Quebec. In addition to conveying the rich heritage of our communities, they often receive francophone and allophone students, thus helping people from all backgrounds learn to live better together. English public schools teach students to be open to the world and to make important contributions to the development of our society.*

*In this context, we ask you to carefully consider the need to devote the necessary investments to fully support the vital role of English schools in Quebec. We are convinced that, like us, you know that properly funded public education creates better communities for everyone.*

*We the undersigned,*

*Coasters Association Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA)*

*English Community Organization of Lanaudière (ECOL)*

*English Parents Committee Association (EPCA)*

*Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN)*

*Quebec Federation of Home and School Association (QFHSA)*

*Regional Association of West Quebecers (RAWQ)*

*Voice of English-Speaking Québec (VEQ)*

# In case you missed it: Fall Conference

## Don't mess with our school boards!

Those weren't the exact words that Marlene Jennings used as Keynote Speaker at the QFHSA Fall Conference, but the message was abundantly clear: English school boards in Quebec must stay, and the community must be allowed to run them.

Her comments at the conference, held at Roslyn Elementary School in Westmount on Saturday November 7th, 2015, drew several rounds of applause from QFHSA representatives, assembled for their semi-annual get together of speakers and workshops.

Jennings was speaking as Chair of the Elections Systems Study Panel which tabled its findings and recommendations to the Quebec Minister of Education: François Blais, in mid-September. She is well-known amongst the English-speaking community of Quebec, as the first black Quebecer to be elected to Canadian Parliament and a minister in the Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin.

The panel was convened to provide the Minister of Education with advice on reforms to the English school board electoral system in Quebec, after proposing then abandoning the idea of abolishing school boards all together. The panel did that . . . and more (see details of the Panel's report in adjacent story).

"School boards are the only element of the public system that the English-speaking community can call their own. The democratic legitimacy is missing in other sectors," Jennings declared. She added that it was therefore important to enhance voter participation, as an important element of community vitality rather than eliminate public engagement (as what has already been done in the health sector).

As much as the reforms to the school board electoral system were the *raison d'être* for the panel's work, Jennings returned to the link with community vitality a number of times. Despite diminishing demographics in many English-speaking communities and the barriers imposed by language laws, she said that the success rate of English school boards surpasses the province's own objectives.

"English school boards have to stay as our primary educational institutions. We're even doing better than Ontario . . . We need strong voices to get this message out!" she exclaimed. In essence, Jennings conveyed that there's no need to penalize English school boards for having done a good job, just let them get on with it.

'Getting on with it' according to Jennings, means keeping universal suffrage and the right to have elected representatives (School Commissioners). Therefore, making it easier for English-speaking

residents to get and stay on the electoral list, and implementing electronic voting amongst numerous other recommendations. In addition while they're at it, she said the provincial government should consider introducing measures to strengthen Quebec's English school system, including allowing students educated in English outside of Canada to attend English schools.

Finally, Jennings raised Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a non-exception clause that establishes the Constitutional provisions for minority language education rights in Canada. While school board elections are not specifically designated under Section 23, the panel put forward that protection for the right of minority language community members to elect School Board Commissioners and Chairs from within their communities through universal suffrage, is the natural means by which to exercise their right to the management and control of their education system.

She said this is common across Canada, and the elimination of this right for the English-speaking community of Quebec would have equally serious implications for the Francophone communities outside of Quebec.

"The strength of school boards is the link to community to ensure that the educational system adapts to student's needs," Jennings said, in reinforcing her message not to mess with success.



### **Congratulations to the following Home and School Members who won prizes at the 2015 Fall Conference. Thank you to our donors!**

Gift Certificate donated by: NoG's About It  
Winner: Lisa Marie Foye - St. John Fisher Elementary

Lamontagne Chocolate Basket  
Winner: Tara McNally - Dorval Elementary

Literacy-themed games donated by the QFHSA  
Winner: Lisa Yee - Beacon Hill Elementary

World's Finest Chocolate Basket  
Winners: Samantha Patel - Merton Elementary

Gift Certificate and Kit donated by Budding Artists  
Winner: Joanna Duy - Edinburgh Elementary

## Read to your child cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

early?" No, but strongly believes that they should be read to early, agreeing with DePoe that you should read to your child before they are born.

She added that families and communities are a greater predictor of literacy than schools, not to diminish the role of schools, but to emphasize that developing a culture of reading early on is very important.

Shohet noted that Sweden, with an education ministry one-tenth the size of Quebec's, produces extraordinary results through programs such "Learning Holidays" where families vacation to learn together. "The Swedes just have a strong cultural value attached to reading," she said.

As for learning two languages at the same time, Shohet stated that it was very clear that immersion and bilingual programs are not a detriment to a child's language acquisition and literacy skills. If a child is having difficulty in a course, it is more likely that this is due to learning difficulties with the subject matter, and not because the course is being given a second language.

She noted that children can learn a second language at any stage, but the main benefit of early second language acquisition is pronunciation. She followed by referring the audience to an online video by Caroline Erdos, PhD, S-LP(C), a Speech-Language Pathologist at the Montreal Children's Hospital, specializing in bilingualism and multilingualism, reading impairment, oral language impairment, foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and craniofacial disorders. (See the video at [www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/news/video-posted-evidence-bilingualism-myths-and-truths-re-typically-developing-and-risk-children](http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/news/video-posted-evidence-bilingualism-myths-and-truths-re-typically-developing-and-risk-children)).

*Leah Trineer, QFHSA Treasurer, is the coordinator of the Born to Read program at Roslyn Elementary School and is the former chair of the QFHSA literacy committee. Born to Read is a QFHSA program, where a bag of books is given to newborn babies whose siblings attend Roslyn Elementary. The board books emphasize concepts i.e. colours, numbers, etc. Roslyn donates about 16 bags per year at a cost of approximately \$300.00.*

*Carol Meindl, the Executive Director of the QFHSA, ended the workshop by highlighting that each school should have a copy of the QFHSA's Children's Literacy Resource Guide. This guide outlines a variety of activities and strategies that parents and teachers can adopt to improve literacy for all age groups. This guide can be obtained from the QFHSA office (digital format only). In addition, Carol emphasized that the QFHSA organizes contests to encourage literacy such as Family Treasures/Famous Family Recipes and Farm to Fork. The winning essays are published in the QFHSA News. More information can be found at [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org).*

## Fall Conference Workshop Reviews

### Brian Smith – Money Talks Workshop

Brian Smith from the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education (CFEE) gave a very informative workshop on Money Matters at the QFHSA Fall Conference. It quickly became apparent that the attendees were there to learn more about finances and financial literacy both for themselves and for their children. He said that financial literacy educates people to make better choices and have a financially responsible lifestyle that their children can emulate. Brian gave us some facts about grade 11 students that were recently surveyed:

- 93% of youth think learning about money is important
- 20% of graduates will be making \$100 000 within 10 years
- 50% of high school grads are already carrying some amount of debt

The Quebec government is planning on adding some financial literacy to the curriculum next year, albeit starting with grade 11 students. Who wouldn't want to know how to do your own taxes, how to buy a car, how does a credit card works, how to buy a house with a mortgage and a million more questions! As adults, most of us stumble blindly through these only as we encounter them in our lives. Imagine how much more confident we could have been about buying a house if we had learned more about the process when we were younger! Brian and the CFEE offer school sessions to encourage teachers to integrate these financial lessons into their every day teaching. He also offers something similar to a Science Fair called a Money Fair at schools. Student teams pick a financial topic such as any of the questions above, then present it to others in a science fair like event.



**Workshop: Teamwork for Success  
Instructor: Dynamix**

“You go into a teamwork workshop wondering how a bunch of random strangers are going to react to a sales pitch, but Corey is one of those unassuming people who puts you at ease while still bringing the energy up in the room. We did two activities: both problem solving tasks, that you think a bunch of reasonably well-educated people would be able to handle.

Well we could handle the tasks, but as Corey noted to us it was never about the task we were engaged in. It was what it caused us to remember:  
**Teamwork needs a team and that communication and being goal-oriented is important. Taking the time to build your Home and School team is never time a waste of time. The ideas and energy that you gain from engaging in team building pays long dividends to your organization, if you can get people engaged.**

I appreciate that there are professionals like Corey and groups like Dynamix that bring together Home and School associations to engage in teamwork workshops!”

- David McLeod, Willingdon Home & School

**Workshop: Managing Stress Through Mindfulness**

**Instructor: DM Family Services**



“I attended the workshop on Managing Stress

Through Mindfulness, and although there was not enough time to complete it, it certainly made an impact! The facilitators/speakers are so engaging that time flew by and I was wishing that there was time for more.

Simple steps with great effects. Tips were given on how to manage stress in a world of chaos and constant scheduling. The exercises were very helpful, and I can see how this will help our kids with school related stress.

**In general, the Fall Conference speaks for itself. It was a great success- especially with the Honorable Marlene Jennings, who is a true supporter of the English Community and the English School boards. Her lecture was an eye opener on how we should not let our guards down when it comes to protecting our rights!”**

- Fe Manibog-Solomon, Dorval Elementary Home & School

**Workshop: Writing Your Home and School By-Laws**

The QFHSA 2015 Fall Conference is the first conference that I have attended as President of our local association and, therefore, *Writing your Home & School By-laws* was necessarily the first stop on my agenda. Now, I know that many of you are thinking how boring this would be, but it was in fact quite the opposite! Great discussion and debate was had around the roles and responsibilities of Home & School Associations, Governing Boards and school administration, and highlighting the potential areas of conflict between the two... always a lively topic. By looking at the framework of the constitution, bylaws and standing rules, and understanding the role and reasons for each, it helps guide us in our decision-making and takes some of the emotion out of the equation. Talking through the practical terms of implementation also helped establish potential areas of concern and highlighted the need for reflection on the way we function today, in light of changes in technology and the structure of families and society.

- Tricia Steeves, Chelsea Home and School Association

**Workshop: Elections workshop  
Instructors: Brian Rock and Debi Brown**

“A PowerPoint presentation was given about the proper procedures for



local Home and School elections. Debi went through the 7 steps of an election. Each school has a constitution and by-laws, which should be reviewed every few years and consulted prior to elections. Elections must be held at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or a special meeting. Members must be informed in advance that elections will take place”.

7 Steps for elections;

1. Sign-in at meeting, to ensure only members are voting.
2. Ask principal or alumni if they can help with elections.
3. Explain procedures.
4. Nominations: Depending on by-laws, can be from floor.
5. Use secret ballots and count votes in same room if possible. Only defeated candidates can ask for the number of votes they lost by.
6. REPEAT procedures for each position. Executive Committees should consist of a minimum of 4 people: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.
7. Swearing in of new officers. Meeting is then adjourned. Can be followed by a regular H&S meeting.

Many questions about elections came up and as always much was learned. We were also given guidelines for fundraising which was very interesting.

- Anne MacDonald, Beaconsfield High School



# Election Systems Study Panel Summary

The Elections System Study Panel was co-sponsored by the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations (QFHSA), the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA), the Quebec English School Board Associations (QESBA) and the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). It was chaired by the Honourable Marlene Jennings, P.C., LLB, along with Leo La France, Rachel Hunting, Brian Rock and Rhonda Boucher as members. The panel was convened by Francois Blais: Quebec Minister of Education, in June to produce a report by September.

## Panel Mandate

- Review past school board elections and election systems and make recommendations on how to improve the election process.
- Identify options for selecting School Commissioners.
- Collect expert advice on minority language rights in education.
- Seek out the views of interested organizations and individuals, on school board governance and operational issues
- Deliver a report on community response, input and opinions of experts, as well as other pertinent information, and recommendations to meet Constitutional guarantees and improve voter participation.

## Input

Individuals and groups from across Québec provided our panel with suggestions, research and background on school boards, democratic representation, voter participation and non-participation, voting process, Canadian Constitution, mergers, efficiency, community involvement, student success, staff support, and more.

## Findings

- The current practice of electing English school boards by universal suffrage is the best and perhaps the only way to fulfill the government's obligation to protect the minority language community's constitutional rights.

- The strength of elected school boards is that Commissioners have a special link to the community they serve.
- School boards are the one element of the public system that the English-speaking minority can call its own, thus giving it a degree of democratic legitimacy that is absent for English speakers dealing with other public services.
- Steps should be taken to facilitate voter participation.
- Government should consider introducing measures to strengthen Quebec's English school system, including allowing students educated in English outside Canada to attend English schools.

## The Canadian Constitution

- Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a non-exception clause, establishes the Constitutional provisions for minority language education rights in Canada.
- While not specifically designated under Section 23, protection for the right of minority language community members to elect School Board Commissioners and Chairs from within their communities through universal suffrage is the natural means by which to exercise their right to the management and control of their education system, and is common across Canada.
- French-language minority outside Quebec elects its school boards across Canada.

## Recommendations

- Parent Commissioners continue to be elected through the current Parent Committee Electoral College system with all of the rights, responsibilities and duties of Commissioners elected through universal suffrage, but with the addition of the right to vote.
- The number of Parent Commissioners will be increased from four (4), to six (6) on each School Board.

- Maintain possibility of co-opting Commissioners based on expertise.
- There is a consultative role for staff to play, but maintain clear lines between staff and management.
- Further discussion is required about Cycle II Secondary student involvement on Council of Commissioners

## Election Process

- Online, telephone and mail-in ballot elections only.
- Elections Quebec oversee elections.
- English and French school boards collaborate on revision of voter lists.
- Modify the voter registration process so that English graduates and their parents, as well as English 18 year olds, are automatically on English school board voting list.
- Election Day voter registration, if online voting is not implemented.

## Conclusion

- The Election Systems Study Panel has determined that not only must the English school boards continue as the primary institutions- ensuring the vitality of Québec's English Minority Communities, but also the school governance system will not benefit from any addition of new governance structures, imposed under the guise of improving service delivery to English Minority students.
- Judged by student results, English school boards are a success story. Focus should be on how to make them better. Government should work with school boards to strengthen the system.

*Adapted from the presentation by Hon. Marlene Jennings, P.C., LLB to the QFHSA 2015 Fall Conference at Roslyn School on November 7, 2015.*

## Online donations through CanadaHelps.org



For the last few years, QFHSA has been offering an online donation service to our Home and School Associations. Home and Schools can have their association listed under our QFHSA CanadaHelps account, as a designated fund. This enables Home and School members to make online donation to their local association through one site.

So far, four (4) local associations have taken advantage of this service, but there is room for more! The advantage to members is that **CanadaHelps issues the charitable tax receipt immediately**, minus only a 3.9% administration fee.

### How It Works:

1. Members go online to our site [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org).
2. Clicks on Donate Now logo of CanadaHelps at the bottom left.
3. Once on the CanadaHelps site, select the fund to which members wish to make a contribution under general. Enter an amount you wish to donate. (The minimum donation that can be made through CanadaHelps is \$3.90)
4. Enter your chosen payment method.
5. Enter your tax receipt information.
6. Once complete, members will receive a confirmation from CanadaHelps, and a charitable tax receipt.
7. In addition members will receive a thank you message from QFHSA, on behalf of the selected member association.
8. Members' donations are then deposited into the QFHSA bank account.

QFHSA tracks the donations made to each Home and School Association fund. At the end of each month, the QFHSA issues a cheque to the respective Home and School Association.

This is an excellent option members who don't have the time to sell fundraising items or participate in the majority of events, but want to do what they can to support their local association.

If your Home and School Association would like to have this option available, bring it up at your next Home and School meeting and have a member contact us!

## QCGN Youth Projects



The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), the Fondation Notre Home Foundation and CBC Quebec are proud to bestow the first ever **Young Quebecer Leading The Way Award** to **Alexander Gordon**. Alexander received the award during the **Goldbloom Awards ceremony on October 8, 2015**, at the Saint-James Club in Montreal.

The Young Quebecers Leading The Way Award was established by The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), Fondation Notre Home Foundation and CBC Quebec in 2015. The award was established to recognize and celebrate the leadership and innovative thinking of young English-speaking Quebecers, who are engaged in innovative initiatives that create change in our communities.

Led by QCGN in partnership with the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) and the Institut du Nouveau Monde (INM), Young Quebecers Leading the Way is a three (3) year project that will engage hundreds of young Quebecers in the

## Out and About

### October 27

QFHSA was invited to make a presentation to the Sociology of Education class of Concordia University. President Brian Rock and Executive Director Carol Meindl addressed the students, and gave them a crash course in the history and general activities of Home and School Associations in Quebec.

### October 28

The Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) responded to our request to discuss the 2015 resolutions, and invited QFHSA to meet the board. President Brian Rock, Director Linton Garner and Executive Director Carol Meindl, met with the board and discussed the resolutions, as well as the QFHSA brief to the Election Systems Study Panel in August.

### November 9

QFHSA was well represented at the 5th COFFEE-Quebec meeting held at the English Parents Committees Association (EPCA) offices by President Brian Rock, Treasurer Leah Trineer, Directors Rickhey Margolese and Ginette Sauvé-Frankel, and Executive Director Carol Meindl. The guest speaker was Richard Bourhis, Ph. D. of Université du Québec à Montréal. He presented his research on the Decline of the English School System in Quebec, to jump start the evening's discussion. The hot topic was the eminent tabling of legislation in the National Assembly, to abolish school board elections.

## Add a morning physical activity program with BOKS!

Life changing events take different forms. That was the case for Kathleen Tullie, Founder and Executive Director of BOKS, who after 18 years in the corporate real estate world decided she wanted to spend her time working on something that makes a difference.

Kathleen had a desire to engage the community and leave a lasting positive impact on children. Being an athlete, she knew exercise made her feel good and more focused, but it wasn't until reading the book *Spark* by Dr. John Ratey of Harvard Medical School that she had evidence to support her feeling. Dr. Ratey laid out a compelling argument for the positive correlation between exercise, academic performance and behavioural issues.

THE STUDIES *demonstrate* THAT GETTING KIDS MOVING BEFORE SCHOOL COULD TRANSLATE TO BETTER *academic* PERFORMANCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

It was then that Kathleen's desire and new-found evidence took form as she became an outspoken proponent of physical activity for children. Her idea to bring "Fit Kidz Get Up & Go" now BOKS, to her children's school was born.

Since that first morning a lot has happened. Not only are the moms involved as trainers and volunteers, but so are the dads, physical education teachers, educators and other interested parties helping to run the program. Kathleen states unequivocally that the reason for the program's success is a perfect combination of passion from parents, educators and school staff that have the motivation to make a difference in children's lives.



Kathleen and her "Mom team" Cheri Levitz and Jen Lawrence, created a non-profit corporation and approached Reebok International Ltd for a t-shirt sponsorship. They had no idea how closely aligned Reebok's goals were with their own.

From that conversation grew a collective mission to provide opportunities for children to have healthy bodies and minds, and by doing this, students could also find success in the classroom.

OUR *mission* IS TO PROMOTE THE PROFOUND IMPACT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON A CHILD'S MIND, BODY AND *community*.

For more information, visit: [www.bokskids.com](http://www.bokskids.com)

- Kathleen Tullie, BOKS Founder



## A chance to inspire other parents to volunteer

Many of us who volunteer with our local Home and School have come to recognize the benefits for the school and for our children...and many of us are not blind to the advantages to ourselves! Home and School participation can bring out the best in people, and give creative scope for their talents. One can easily get “the bug” and find themselves willing to volunteer for just about anything and everything. The more you participate, the more confidence you build in yourself and your abilities. Others unfortunately, are a bit more reticent...

Everyone has their personal story. Perhaps their own experience with elementary or high school carries unpleasant memories, and they would just rather not step inside those doors ever again. Maybe they feel intimidated by the principal or the teachers. Maybe they feel inadequate, because they perceive their level of education may not be as high as that of other parents. Maybe they don't feel they fit in with other parents for lifestyle, cultural or ethnical reasons.

But once these obstacles are overcome, the benefits of working with others, sharing ideas, talents and connections become apparent. Volunteering and contributing to a great cause you believe in can be very life-affirming. The more parents become involved in education, the better.

So how do we reach those who have not yet “seen the light”?

QFHSA will be partnering with Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN) and Community Learning Centers Initiative, who have asked the QFHSA to assist them in addressing the question of: How do we reach these parents?

We are asking Home and School Associations to assist them in canvassing parents, to find parents who would be willing to share their personal story to inspire reticent parents to “roll up their pant legs, take a deep breath, and dip their toes into the warm waters of parental involvement in education”.

If you think your own personal story could be an inspiration to others, or you know of someone whose story would be valuable, please consider sharing it with us. Contact QFHSA Executive Director Carol Meindl at: (514) 481-5619 or Email at: carolmeindl@qfhsa.org.

We would like to see these parents swimming around with confidence and enthusiasm in no time!

## Are English school graduates bilingual enough to take their place in Quebec society?

**ABEE would like parents to let us know why you chose an English school for your children, and describe your expectations for the school as regards bilingualism and biliteracy.** Indeed, some among you may already have a child who has graduated. Were those expectations met?

At the previous Minister of Education's request, ABEE is exploring the issue of bilingualism and biliteracy, during the 2015-2016 school year. We believe it is the expectation of parents that English schools must graduate bilingual students. Thus, our central question is: Are graduates of English schools bilingual and biliterate enough to take their place in Québec's society- and in particular, the workforce? We believe that English schools have made enormous contributions in this regard, but we need to ascertain whether the Minister of Education has a larger role in supporting the English schools in this endeavour, and what that role could be?

The Advisory Board will look at the research on this topic, meet with various experts and professionals from the field, and with graduates of English schools. ABEE would also greatly appreciate feedback from parents.

We sincerely hope that parents of each local Home and School Association will respond to these few questions, and make additional comments in regards to your expectation, experience and results. We shall certainly get back to you with our results. **We are looking forward to hearing from you by the end of January.**

**Please contact ABEE: Email: [cela-abee@education.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:cela-abee@education.gouv.qc.ca), or Mail: Lynn Travers, Advisory Board on English Education, 600 Fullum St. Montreal (Québec) H2K 4L1.**

*The Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) was set up in 1992 to advise the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research on all matters affecting the educational services offered in English elementary and secondary schools, and vocational and adult education centres.*

*To date, the Advisory Board has submitted 25 briefs to successive Ministers of Education over the last 23 years. The Board's advice has covered a wide range of matters affecting the education of our students in English schools and centres. The Minister of Education may solicit the Board to address a particular topic, or the Advisory Board itself may bring to the Minister's attention an issue affecting the English school system.*

*Each year, the Minister names new members to serve on the Advisory Board from a list of nominees put forward by various English education associations and organizations that represent: teachers, parents, schools, board administrators, commissioners, individuals as well as others, who are involved in post-secondary education. The term of office of the 16 members is on average three (3) years. Nominations are accepted at any time.*



# EVERBLAST CARNIVALS

## WHAT IS AN EVERBLAST CARNIVAL?

Everblast offers a wide range of fun, unique and active games to make your carnival huge success. You have the power to mix and match from a variety of games your kids will love! Check out some of the games and go to [everblastplay.com](http://everblastplay.com) for more information.

### What is a bundle?

A bundle is packed with 4 games based on a specific theme.

### How many games do we need?

We recommend an average of 1 game for every 15 kids.



## GIANT SLINGSHOT

Who doesn't love to sling objects through the air? Using a 3 person operated giant slingshot, unique to Everblast participants get to take their best shot as they try to hit targets.



## HUMAN VELCRO

Human Velcro is the modern dunk tank! Whether it be an Everblast Play Pro or an adult from your organization, kids will have a blast attempting to hit targets on the Human Velcro suit.

**WARNING:** No adult has ever gotten hurt in the playing of Human Velcro!



## SPORTS LOVERS

Calling all sports lovers!! Everblast has a variety of cool and unique sports activities perfect for a carnival. Sports includes Soccer, Hockey and more!!



## GIANT GAMES

Giant games include a variety of classic oversized board games that everybody loves! Games include, Giant Connect Four, Giant Jenga and more...



## TERRIFIC TEAMWORK

There's no better feeling than completing a challenge as a team! In Terrific Teamwork, kids get to feel great as they take on fun and active team challenges and races.

## SURVEY: Assist LEARN in supporting and improving your child's learning

LEARN would like to engage parents, to find out if parents are aware of LEARN and their resources/tools for their children, and what are the wants/needs of parents.

LEARN is re-examining how they can better support parents along the educational journey of their children. They have many resources/tools for schools, teachers, students, but only few for parents. To find out what parents want/need, they have gone to the experts: groups who work with parents, including: Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA), English Parents Committee Association (EPCA), and the Fédération des comités de parents du Québec (FCPQ).

LEARN's aim is to empower parents/families to access information/resources/tools which will help them support their children's learning at home, but first they need to ask parents what their needs are.

What do parents need to be engaged in their child's learning both in school and outside of school?

- What role do other parents play in engaging the disengaged parent? Would that be less intimidating? How do you keep them engaged?
- What issues/topics do parents want more information on, but that schools/school boards don't provide or don't have time/resources to provide?
- Do parents understand the curriculum? Do they want to understand the curriculum?
- What is the best way to reach parents: Online? Meeting at school? Email? Videoconference/webinar?
- How do we engage Francophone parents in Anglophone schools?

This is where Home and School Associations can play a role. Members can ask these questions above to encourage members to complete the upcoming short survey, which will be sent to Home and School Associations in the next few weeks.

**We urge all Home and School Associations to participate in this survey, so we can provide some answers to LEARN, in order to assist them in helping to better support our children's' learning.**



HEC MONTRÉAL

### CHILDREN IN SECOND GRADE TO PARTICIPATE IN A SCIENTIFIC STUDY ON THE USE OF IPAD IN LEARNING MATH!

We are looking for English-speaking children between the ages of 7 and 8 years registered in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for a scientific research project studying the learning of mathematics.

Accompanied by their parents, children must be available during the weekend to participate. **The experiment will last one (1) hour at the Tech3Lab-HEC Montreal, on the weekends of November (7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 & 29) and December (5, 6, 12, 13, 19 & 20).** In the study, children will have to answer mathematical questions on a tablet (iPad). **Participants will receive \$ 50 and a free textbook as compensation.**

**To register for this study, register on the website below: <https://goo.gl/y5WX5j>.** The selected participants will be contacted by our research team.

This project is under the supervision of Professor Pierre-Majorique Léger. He can be reached by email at [pierre-majorique.leger@hec.ca](mailto:pierre-majorique.leger@hec.ca). This research project was approved by the Ethics Research Council of HEC Montreal.



## DM DEAR DM,

My son is a really great kid. He gets along well with his sister, does what he's asked, and is usually in a good mood. At school, I hear that he's a wonderful boy who does well academically. But when it comes to recess and lunch, the teachers say he's not doing as well... they say he's lacking "social skills". He has trouble sharing and always wants to be first. When things don't go his way he's not so happy, and he's not always sure how to handle those situations. I've noticed lately he's not getting any calls, or invitations to birthday parties. He's tried inviting a few different people over for a playdate, but nobody has been accepting—and he's starting to say "nobody likes me". Watching him so lonely is just breaking my heart. How can I help him with making and keeping friends?

### DEAR MAKING & KEEPING FRIENDS,

As social beings, one of the things we all have in common is our need to belong and to be valued by those with whom we spend our time. Many of today's youth struggle with social challenges. They may have difficulty with social and emotional regulation, or managing frustration when things don't turn out the way they expected them to. For these children, making and keeping friends can be the most difficult and painful aspect of being at school, and can create sadness or worry. The good news is, social skills can be taught!

Social skills are the foundation for getting along with others and are a part of our everyday life. Whether it's going to school, saying a friendly hello to a classmate, being a member of a team or working on a class project, strong social skills are priceless. Research has shown that social skills are the base for positive self-esteem: When children feel good about themselves, they are more willing to take positive risks — academically and socially. With practice and direct teaching, children can improve their friendship skills!

One program that focuses on social skills is the "Incredible Years" programs, with a 3 pronged approach (ie students, parents, and educators). The program for students, "Dina Dinosaur"\* is designed to teach children emotional regulation, frustration tolerance, communication skills, problem solving strategies, as well as team building. Through the use of interactive activities and games, the program promotes social and emotional competence.

Parents can also support their child's learning by joining the "Incredible Years"\* Parent Training Program. The parental component is an interactive strategy based program that is designed to prevent new problems, address current challenges and support parents in learning new skills to support their children's healthy development. With the right knowledge and skills, parents are in the position to support their children in developing the social skills so necessary for success at home and school. Sometimes having the opportunity to discuss challenges with other parents who have similar struggles can be invaluable. Contact DM for more information – Together we can make a difference!

Sincerely, DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

\*Based on Incredible Years Programs.

**"WHETHER IT'S GOING TO SCHOOL,  
SAYING A FRIENDLY HELLO TO A CLASSMATE,  
BEING A MEMBER OF A TEAM  
OR WORKING ON A CLASS PROJECT,  
STRONG SOCIAL SKILLS ARE PRICELESS. "**

**DM'S SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS CAN HELP.**

**CONTACT DM TODAY !**



### DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

**Individual Therapy for Youth and Adults**

**Couple Therapy / Family Therapy**

**Social Skills Groups for Youth of all Ages**

**Parent Training Courses / Parent Support**

**CONTACT DM**

**514.483.9339**

**[www.dmfamilyschool.com](http://www.dmfamilyschool.com)**





# June 6th is National Health & Fitness Day



## What are you doing on June 6th? Join us on National Health and Fitness Day and Get Up, Get Out, and Get Active!

Canadians across the country are surrounded by a natural physical landscape that begs us to be active. Be it hiking, swimming, skiing, canoeing or cycling – the opportunities for physical activity are endless! However, despite the possibilities provided by our natural playground, we are facing a physical activity crisis in Canada. Less than 5% of children and 15% of adults are meeting the recommendations in the [Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines](#).

“National Health and Fitness Day is a great way to encourage Canadians to get off the couch and get active,” said Senator Nancy Greene Raine. “Physical activity is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle and an important factor in reducing the burden on our health care system. I truly believe that Canada can be the Fittest Nation on Earth, and National Health and Fitness Day is an important step to making that a reality.”

## QCGN Youth Projects cont'd

*(Continued from page 10)*

celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Canadian Confederation. The project will oversee three (3) annual youth forums in 2015, 2016 and 2017, where participants aged 15 – 25 years old will offer their views on the significance of youth engagement in shaping the future of their country

A great project to suggest to the Grade 10 and 11 students of our high school Home and School Associations!

For more information on the award, please visit: [www.notrehome-qc.ca](http://www.notrehome-qc.ca). For information on the project visit: [www.youthleadingway150.org](http://www.youthleadingway150.org). (For the French site, please visit [jeunesauxcommandes150.org](http://jeunesauxcommandes150.org)).



## QFHSA—CHSF Report

By Rickey Margolese

The 120th AGM of the Canadian Home and School Federation met on Thursday, November 13th, 2015 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, our QFHSA Director and CHSF Representative Rickey Margolese attended on the QFHSA's behalf.

The five (5) current Federation members were in attendance: Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations, Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, New Brunswick Federation of Home and School Associations, the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory (via: skype), and Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations.

Two (2) Policy Resolutions were adopted at this year's AGM, both submitted by the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations:

1. History of Residential Schools – to be integrated into school curriculum in all provinces
2. Financial Literacy - to be integrated into school curriculum in all provinces

The election of the 2015-2016 Executives was held, and a new Executive committee was chosen. The remaining 2015-2016 Executives are: Vice-President: Cambee Dorrington and Past-President: Janet Walsh.

### **Congratulations to new members of the CHSF Executive Committee!**

President, Acclaimed: Cynthia Richards

Vice-President: Diane Power

Secretary/Treasurer, Acclaimed: Michelle Ercolini

### **Fall Face-To-Face CHSF Board Of Directors Meeting**

The Fall Face-To-Face CHSF Board of Directors Meeting held during the CHSF AGM two (2) day conference November 12 - 14, 2015, was attended by: Nova Scotia, Quebec, New Brunswick and Ontario.

This year's meeting was very productive and exciting. New communications components were developed, including:

- establishment of a CHSF Presentation/Display kit, to be given to provinces as part of their membership;
- TSAW (Teacher Staff Appreciation Week) poster along with a thank you

card, were finalized and are ready for distribution.

CHSF is also planning to set up an online store for member associations to purchase items to give to their teachers, staff and volunteers. Look for it on the CHSF website in the coming months. Work continued on updating the Standing Rules to complement the By-Laws document, approved last year.

CHSF is also exploring partnership opportunities with Media Smarts, a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy. Media Smarts' vision is for children and youth to have the critical thinking skills to engage with media, as active and informed digital citizens.

The CHSF AGM also benefitted from the Plenary Speaker – Andrew Middleton, from Atlantic Youth. Atlantic Youth is a Nova Scotia based agency providing innovative youth support options for schools, families, communities and government agencies all across Canada. Their philosophy is rooted in



# Canadian Home & School Federation

## CHSF cont'd

the belief that sustainability is intimately connected with experience. They work hard to make their services meaningful, memorable and fun. Their approach integrates unique experiential learning opportunities spread over a diverse portfolio of programs that build capacity, promote social growth, develop positive leadership, and improve the general well-being of youth. When you "create the right conditions ... any kid can be great"!

Also, we are pleased to announce that upon the completion of handing in the QFHSA report to the members, that it was decided that CHSF would send a letter to the Quebec Minister of Education, supporting to the continuation of Quebec English school boards and the election of their Commissioners by universal suffrage.

Canadian Home and School Federation continues to represent the voice of the parent at the national level!

### "WHERE'S MY SCHOOL?"

Disappointed that your school is not in the Focus on the Locals section?

Please talk to your Home and School members to submit the wonderful things your association is doing for our next issue in November 2015 to

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

# Cedarcrest



The Dedicated Home and School volunteers who made this year's Cedarcrest annual corn roast such a success. Thank you!



# Edgewater Elementary



This year our Home & School family has grown & we have currently a record amount of members.

First, our fall fundraising campaign kicked off on October 5th. This year we changed our supplier. We went with "Tasty Batters" and we couldn't be happier with our choice. The response to the new flavors offered (including a certified peanut-free, gluten-free & sugar free option) were very well received in our community. Our sales increased substantially from the previous years.

After that was our annual "Halloween Hullabaloo" family dance and yet again it was another success! The costumes were "spook-tacular", the baked treats at our bake table were overwhelmingly "eerily" delicious & the dancing "frightfully" entertaining! Much appreciation to Kimberly Eccleston for all her hard work.

Our holiday craft fair will be taking place on Saturday November 28th. Pavolina Owczar & her "elves" are in full form getting all the crafters, artists & vendors booked. As well as arranging the children's games & activities, raffle prizes and our popular holiday café.

Right after the cookie dough fundraiser wrapped up on October 26th, our fundraising committee launched their new "Holiday Shopping" operation. They prepared a package of exciting & unique gift ideas for our school families. Not only will our families be avoiding the crowded stores, they will be helping the school at the same time! Thank you Craig Chislett & Classic Authentic for this very exclusive fundraiser!

Furthermore, to finish off this unseasonably warm November, our Scholastic book fair will take over our school library on November 19th for both students & their families to shop for some new books. Particularly, in keeping with our school's theme for this year: "For the love & joy of reading!" We are positive this event will be another winning realization.

# Baie Comeau High School

Bienvenue – De retour en classe '2015-2016'

Vendredi le 18 septembre dernier, c'est à l'occasion d'un dîner de bienvenue, une épluchette de blé d'inde, que tous les élèves de l'école secondaire de Baie-Comeau (Baie Comeau High School) ont été accueillis pour amorcer cette nouvelle année scolaire 2015-2016.

À l'occasion de ce dîner, élèves, parents, enseignants et autres membres du personnel étaient également conviés à venir partager ce repas de bienvenue voulant souligner le début de l'année scolaire 2015-2016. Ce dîner se voulait être un évènement de rassemblement en toute simplicité : épluchette de blé d'inde, hot dogs ainsi qu'un savoureux chili ont été servis à tous.



Ce dîner a été organisé par l'Association Foyer & École (Home & School Association) dont les membres sont des parents et membres du personnel de l'école, tous bénévoles.

Encore une fois cette année, ce dîner a été un énorme succès et a permis d'accueillir un très grand nombre de parents, grands-parents ainsi que d'anciens élèves tous venus débiter avec nous cette nouvelle année et ce, dans une atmosphère chaleureuse, accueillante et familiale.

Bon retour et bonne année scolaire à tous.



# East Hill Elementary

## Halloween is our favourite time of the year

For students who like more tricks than treats at Halloween, East Hill Elementary School turned off the lights in their library on Friday, October 30th and gave their students' vocal chords a good workout.

A team of home and school members transformed the school's library, with the permission of the school's principal, into a haunted house. The scary theme this year was "Pirates of the Hill."

For the past four years or so, East Hill's home and school association, together with parent volunteers, have designed, organized and built a haunted house for their 550 students. Our mom volunteers put many hours into the spooky design and googling set-up. "Awesome!" "It was like walking through a haunted boat," were some of the comments that were heard through the screams and laughter as the children were exiting the haunted house. Home and school members dressed up as scary pirates and skeletons, jumping and crawling out from every corner, stated Ms. Gemma Scopino, East Hill's Home and School president.

Always an important lesson to pass on, it's just as rewarding to give as it is to receive. We can't wait to scare their pants off next year!



# Wilder Penfield



In 2015, our Home & School Association has had an exciting year at Wilder Penfield Elementary school, a very special place in our community. We are honored to serve our school community of parents, teachers, students, volunteers, principal and

staff. This year has included wonderful events for our families: Grand Prix pedal go-carts at our annual year-end BBQ; DVD capturing our students bursting with song and dance at our Groovin' with Michael Jackson concert, Zumba Fundraiser nights, & zany Comedy night. We kickstarted September by hosting the Welcome Wilder Corn roast with outdoor Minigolf, Box hockey & Connect-4. Our team has successfully launched fundraisers including Wilder Wear, online campaigns and pizza/subs/frozen yogurt. We celebrated Halloween at our fun-filled Monster Mash, with students donating canned goods to support Halloween for Hunger as well as snowsuits for needy families. We thanked our dedicated Wilder Penfield teachers with classroom allocation gift cards and we are planning a memorable

Teacher Appreciation week. Our Home & School will be hosting our Candy Land Holiday Craft Fair on December 4, and a new Born-to-Read Program in January. Our men and women are on fire!

Wilder Penfield's Home and School Association are planning many new events in the new year and we would like to invite all to check out our newly created WebPage:

<http://wilderpenfieldhomeandschool.weebly.com/>

Thanks to all our devoted volunteers, parents, school staff and Home and School Association members; we greatly appreciate all your hard work to enhance the life of our beloved students."





# P.E.T.E.S Elementary

Another school year is upon us as the leaves change color and start to fall. The kids were excited to return to school to see old friends and meet new ones. Just as our home and school committee was happy to see long-time members and new ones joining in. We have a fun filled fundraising school year upon us and WE'RE READY. We started the year welcoming our students and their families with our annual corn boil. Yummy!!!!!! Pizza, Movie, fresh air and family time was had at our Outdoor Movie Night. Weather was a little cold but with lots of blankets and a good laugh, we all warmed up. Subway, George le Roi Pizza and TCBY ice cream were back on the menu this year as kids enjoy eating them and parents get a well deserve break from making lunches. Thank you to all who participated and numerous volunteers that make this happen.

ORANGES and GRAPEFRUITS, did somebody call for Vitamin Sunshine. The orders are in and we are waiting for the trucks to roll in from Florida, but not too soon we want to make sure they arrive nice and juicy plus we still need to lift more weights to build muscles, for our 20 and 40 pound boxes. We're already counting on our volunteers with the biggest muscles to help. Thank you in advance.

What's next for P.E.T.E.S. Monster mash PJ party, Bookfair, Holiday breakfast ,stay tuned.....

## St. John Fisher



Wow! What an AMAZING start to the 2015-2016 school year here at St. John Fisher Elementary! So many activities already done! We started the school season with our amazing service of Editions Vaudreuil (back to school supply shopping made easy). One week before school began, a team of dedicated volunteers were ready for parents to come pick up their school supply orders. While parents were waiting for their box of supplies, they had the opportunity to shop for SJF apparel... the choice is always amazing; SJF t-shirts, shorts, jogging pants, sweaters, caps and hats - we have it all!

The day before school started, we 'Welcomed Back' our teachers with an amazing breakfast spread. From fresh fruits, yogurts, croissants and many sweet baked treats - our teachers were surely fueled to start their year off right!

The first day of Kindergarten can be a day of mixed emotions, so we always treat our youngsters to their very own SJF T-shirt to make them feel a part of our school family. This year, parents were given a little something to help them get through this memorable morning - a personal pack of tissues wrapped with a green ribbon! We also handed the parents a note inviting them to Meet & Greet 2015 (Home and School's first meeting).

For the first time, we welcomed our children back to school with a Corn Boil. It was a day of shucking 700+ corn and all the children had fun trying to get the task complete. Once boiled they all enjoyed their sweet cob of corn and many were asking for seconds! It was a 'memory-making' day and our Principals did not mind rolling up their sleeves to help out.



# Onslow Elementary

We kicked off our school year with a Halloween Costume Dance. We had 55 students that came dressed as witches, princesses and vampires. The music was blaring, popcorn was popping, and everyone had a blast!

We are currently doing a Cookie Dough Fundraiser, and are now gearing up for our Annual Christmas Craft Sale. It will be our biggest one yet! We have over 38 tables reserved for local vendors and artisans. It's a one-stop-shop for Christmas shopping. We have homemade soups and chili available for lunch, a Children's Santa Writing Workshop, as well as a special visit from the man in red himself! We also received a generous donation from a local group that we put towards the purchase of new lights for our stage. We are looking forward to a successful year!

# Westwood High School

## Winter Wonderland Craft Fair Success!

THANK YOU to everyone who came to the Westwood Craft Fair November 28th, and supported our schools: Westwood Junior and Westwood Senior! Thanks to our wonderful crafters and vendors who purchased tables in our gym - we hope you had a great day. All our table bookings were done through an online registration this year in the hopes of simplifying things, and making for a more impartial registration process. Thanks to our generous sponsors for your gift donations, because of your big hearts we were able to raffle away baskets worth \$50-\$100 and many Grand Prizes worth \$100-\$1000. Proceeds went towards supporting our Westwood Cafe, bake sale, Library book sale, and the Grade 11 students' fundraising for prom. Thank you to all our eager student volunteers and all our parent volunteers who gave their time, baking, cooking or sourcing gifts. We had such a terrific group of parents planning and coordinating committees, that it made everything so much more enjoyable. We are very

lucky as a Home and School. The Westwood community is richer in so many ways!

On another note, Westwood Home and School has increased their membership quite nicely compared to last year's. By the end of September, we already had 70 members. In October, we were up to 90 members and counting! Our high school parents are very involved, and looking for ways to help the students and schools. Thank you!

We have all our Home and School membership and fundraising online this year, with payments possible through PayPal. It has made registrations, compiling lists and entering data much easier (of course after a few kinks were worked out). A huge thank you to Isabelle Fleury, for all her work on the e-commerce website that making this all possible. Visit us at [www.supportwestwood.com](http://www.supportwestwood.com), to see her hand work!



# Flemming Elementary

Another great start to our 2015-2016 school year here at Flemming Elementary! The students got a pleasant surprise when they arrived on their first day of school. Our wonderful Flemming Home and School members worked countless hours during the summer holiday re-vamping the once "boring" school yard into a fabulous place to play and work. Many hours were put into sweeping, painting, fixing, weeding and simply embellishing our yard to look bright and happy. Our members had organized several fundraisers for this special 'needed to be done' project. The hard work paid off with a few local businesses giving us generous grants to finish up in style, with: new picnic tables, nets for the soccer goals, and a few other little fun things. Loads of laughter, sunshine and great time spent together by our members, so that the kids, parents, teachers and staff could enjoy this newly cleaned up yard.



We all know that it is a little harder these past few weeks with the strikes, compressions and work-to-rule by teachers and support staff. Our Home and School members have a tremendous amount of respect for these compressions. They stuck together, and once again they pulled it off with another Spooktacular Boo Bash! This Halloween dance is one of the biggest 'must attend' events in our school. Our members pulled together and gave generously of their time and devotion to organize great music, treats, games, door prizes and a much loved- but scary haunted hallway!! The kids were still talking about it on Monday.



No words can express the amount of joy, pleasure, and gratitude we have towards the Flemming Home and School members, who always give so generously their time without any hesitation to make our little Flemming family a wonderful place to learn and play. Simply Thank-You!!

# Honoré Mercier

## Le Doral's First Annual Comedy Night

On Saturday October 24th at the St- Brenda n's church Hall, Honoré Mercier held its First Annual Comedy Night. Le Doral donated a buffet style dinner, with the highlight of the evening being a spectacular show! Comedians: Guido Grasso, Gino Durante, Guido Cocomello and Sebastien Bourgault, sure know how to entertain a crowd! The Home and School planned this event, and it was a great success. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards activities for our students, and school's improvements. Thank our many sponsors for this event.



*Volunteers*



*The comedians*



## Halloween 2015

On Friday October 30th, our students celebrated Halloween. The children enjoyed a surprised guest magician Magislain. Thank you to Daniela Bella and the volunteer parents, who spooked the kids with their scary Home and School morgue haunted house!





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