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## ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUEBEC IS INDEED AT A CROSSROADS

**By Eva Ludvig**  
**QCGN Interim President**

Since I became QCGN President a little more than a month ago, it has been a beehive of activity.

Following our *English-speaking Quebec at a Crossroads* policy forum in early June, there have been appearances before both the House and Senate committees on Official Languages and consultations with the Minister of Official Languages last week.

It is my great honour to follow in the footsteps of past QCGN President **Marlene Jennings**, whom I greatly admire. While Marlene is no longer at the helm, she will not be far away as she continues to fulfill her mandate as a Director of the QCGN Board.

During our June forum we had the opportunity to pay a lighthearted tribute to Marlene as members of the QCGN and the community thanked her for her herculean efforts over the past 18 months. For those of you who missed it, you can view the [tribute to Marlene](#) on the QCGN's YouTube channel. Not to be missed is **Jack Jedwab's** brilliant rendition of *She Did It Her Way*.

I am pleased to say that we emerged from our forum with a renewed resolve to fight Bill 96 and to advocate strongly to ensure new federal legislation updating the Official Languages Act does not abandon English-speaking Quebec by discarding the fundamental principle of linguistic duality. Read our [press release](#).

### QCGN Bids Adieu to Matron Sheila Goldbloom

It is with great sadness that we learned of the recent passing of **Sheila Goldbloom**. She died peacefully at home, surrounded by her family, after a long life dedicated to education and public service. She was 96 years old.

Before meeting and marrying Dr. Victor Goldbloom in New York in 1947, Sheila was working for the League of Women Voters in New York. The couple married and moved to Montreal in 1948. After having three children, she went back to school to do her master's in social work at McGill.

In addition to being a social worker and an Associate Professor at the McGill School of Social Work, Mrs. Goldbloom dedicated her time to numerous community organizations including Centraide, the Red Feather Foundation, Recreation for the Handicapped, Refuge Juan Moreno, Institut Philippe-Pinel, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, the Friends of the McGill Library, the YWCA of Montreal, Jewish Family Services,





member of the Foundation of Greater Montreal.

In 2007, at the age of 82, Mrs. Goldbloom was appointed co-chairperson of the provincial commission on the living conditions of Quebec seniors. There she spoke out on behalf of vulnerable seniors who sought to be treated with greater dignity and humanity.

To mark a life devoted to community service, Mrs. Goldbloom was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 1998 and became a Chevalier of the Ordre national du Québec in 2008. In 2009, the QCGN named its annual Distinguished Community Service Award in honour of Sheila and her late husband Victor. The QCGN's Community Leadership Awards celebrate individuals who, like Sheila and Victor Goldbloom, dedicate themselves to ensuring English-speaking Quebec remains a vibrant community within

Quebec and Canada. For many years Sheila and Victor Goldbloom invested their talents and skills for the betterment of the community and inspired others through their outstanding contributions.

Still active into her eighties and nineties, Mrs. Goldbloom published her autobiography *Opening Doors*, which summarized her life-long commitment to creating opportunities for herself and the many people — particularly women — she mentored and counselled throughout her life. In her memoirs, she wrote that “an individual can make a difference. Each person should live his or her life with that objective.”

Sheilagh's [obituary](#) notes that volunteering your time or making a financial contribution to a community organization would be a fitting way to honour her life. She was a supporter of the [Notre Home Foundation](#) which supports the vitality and wellbeing of Quebec's English-speaking community.

A funeral service was held on July 8 at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. She will be greatly missed.

## Consultation on Federal Action Plan on Official Languages

Last week, members of the QCGN met with Official Languages Minister **Ginette Petitpas Taylor** as part of her cross-Canada tour to consult Canadians on Ottawa's next Action Plan for Official Languages, the federal government's five-year strategy to support official language minority communities. The minister dropped by the QCGN office for an informal lunch with Board members including **Joan Fraser**, **Marlene Jennings** and **Eric Maldoff**, as well as members of the minister's and QCGN staff.



During the meeting, and in consultations in Montreal and Sherbrooke, QCGN, its members and our stakeholders told the Minister that English-speaking Quebecers are concerned about Bill C-13 and the impact it could have on our community – and on support to our official language minority.

In a recent [opinion piece](#) published in the Montreal Gazette ahead of the Minister's visit, the QCGN explains how Canada's Official Languages Act is vital to English-speaking Quebec. The Act is critical because it guarantees our constitutional language rights at the federal level and provides the legislative basis for Ottawa's support to our community via the Action Plan for Official Languages.

We also noted that Bill C-13, which seeks to modernize the Official Languages Act, proposes a radical upheaval that would forever change the relationship between Canada's English linguistic minority and the federal government. The bill is focused on the promotion and protection of French across Canada, including in Quebec — an asymmetrical approach in law toward official languages that places the future of our community at considerable risk. We told the Minister that the QCGN will be watching — and speaking out — to ensure that the modernization of the Official Languages Act does not bring with it an erosion of the federal government's tangible support for the English-speaking minority.

While the bulk of funding in the current [Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future](#) serves to protect and promote French, it also supports an array of organizations, programs and projects that enhance the vitality of Quebec's English-speaking community, including support for the

as literacy, access to health and justice in English, in addition to arts and culture. We must consolidate these investments and continue advocating for our fair share of federal funding to ensure more resources reach more English-speaking Quebecers.

The QCGN has long played a role as a facilitator in these consultation processes, bringing community groups together to ensure our needs are heard and addressed by the federal government. Working together, we successfully advocated for the creation of the **Community Innovation Fund** in which **Employment and Social Development Canada** (ESDC) invested more than \$2 million in social financing initiatives to assist vulnerable populations including seniors, youth, and newcomers. The current Action Plan includes a \$5-million fund for English-speaking Quebec has seen Canadian Heritage finance more than 50 projects. This dedicated fund is supporting groups providing food assistance; heritage institutions and accessible performing arts centres; as well as seniors' centres and organizations serving marginalized youth.

Ahead of the Action Plan consultations, QCGN members and invited stakeholders participated in a brainstorming session in partnership with the Community Development Roundtables during our policy forum in June. The Department of **Canadian Heritage** was on hand to provide an overview of the Action Plan which is being evaluated for renewal. QCGN members and stakeholders actively participated in the Minister's consultations to ensure that the objectives and priorities in the next action plan align with those of our community. We hope the minister and federal policymakers are listening attentively to our realities and concerns. (View a **recording** of our consultation on QCGN's YouTube channel.)

Last week, our network and community succeeded in delivering common messaging on the needs of our English-speaking minority, notably on the priority of economic prosperity. Sectoral consultations continue this week, including one with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) where we expect that message will be amplified. With the high level of community consensus that has been achieved, we need to translate community needs into concrete asks for programming and funding. We are working with members and stakeholder on our report to the Minister which is due at the end of the summer.



## Have your say on the Action Plan

The cross-Canada consultation process for the next action plan for official languages targets the general public, official language minority communities, advocacy organizations, provincial and territorial representatives, and federal institutions and organizations.

In order to gather the opinions of Canadians, the public is invited to send in their comments before the end of August. Consult the Canadian Heritage **website** which provides information on how you can send your comments via mail or email or complete an **online survey**. The survey is anonymous and takes about 10-15 minutes to complete.

## Bill C-13 Would Weaken Support to English-speaking Quebec

As I noted, **Bill C-13 An Act to amend the Official Languages Act, to enact the Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act and to make related amendments to other Acts** is proposing revolutionary change in the purpose of the Act that could have a profound impact on the interpretation of this quasi-constitutional law. The QCGN is strongly opposed to the creation of new rights in federal legislation for only one official language and we are deeply troubled by the negative impacts this

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Quebec's Charter of the French Language or a new federal language regime.

Bill C-13 would territorialize language rights and explicitly recognize the Charter of the French Language, a provincial Act that operates notwithstanding the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Canadians expect the Attorney General to safeguard their fundamental rights and freedoms, something the revised Charter of the French Language takes away. It is inconceivable that the Government of Canada would put forward legislation amending the quasi-constitutional Official Language Act which would recognize a provincial Act that as a result of Law 96 creates a Charter-free zone for more than 9 million Canadians. (Read our [statement](#).)

The QCGN has called on the Government of Canada to immediately remove all reference to Quebec's Charter of the French Language from Bill C-13. We have also observed C-13's failure to address the well-known accountability challenges surrounding Part VII of the Act, the mechanism by which the federal government supports our community. These are among the strong messages that we shared with both the House of Commons and Senate committees on Official Languages.

On June 13, QCGN Board member and former Senator, **Joan Fraser**, our legal counsel, **Marion Sandilands**, and I appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages (OLLO), which is conducting a pre-study of C-13. The focus of this meeting was the proposed *Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act*, which will create new language obligations for French only with respect to private communications between federally regulated businesses operating in Quebec and their employees and customers. A week earlier, on June 6, QCGN Past President **Marlene Jennings**, Joan Fraser, and Marion Sandilands appeared before the House Standing Committee on Official Languages (LANG) for its study on Bill C-13.

View QCGN appearances before [LANG](#) and [OLLO](#), both of which are posted on the [QCGN's YouTube channel](#). Consult the [QCGN's brief](#), which is posted on the [Language Rights](#) page of the [QCGN website](#), and read our [press release](#). I also recommend this [opinion piece](#) by **Michael Prupas** in the Montreal Gazette.

## Progress on QCGN Renewal

You may recall that on May 26, members of the QCGN came together for a Special Meeting and voted to approve the organization's new [mission, vision, values, principle, and pillars](#) and to adopt amended By-laws. These approvals completed a two-year process of consultation, consideration, and reimagining what the QCGN will be for years to come, and we are grateful that our Members have given such strong support for this renewed vision.

The renewal process continues to progress as the QCGN begins to develop policies and procedures to put into place this new vision. As we connect with our Members ahead of our upcoming Annual General Meeting, we are moved by the enthusiastic feedback we have received.

"We are happy to support the QCGN team in the important work that you are undertaking in order to be a stronger and more effective voice for our community. You are rising to the significant challenges at hand and that lifts all of us," commented **Aki Tchitacov**, Executive Director of YES Employment and Entrepreneurship.

We are currently reaching out to all our Members, engaging with them ahead of the AGM and answering questions about the Renewal process. In the next phase, we will be recruiting and broadening our membership to include more groups, organizations and, down the road, individuals who share our vision for the future of Quebec's English-speaking community. This will take flight in earnest following our 2022 AGM being held on October 13.

The Renewal process will enable the QCGN to provide a voice to a broader range of people within our evolving community and will better position the organization to remain a leading voice and advocate for us all. Stay tuned for further updates.

## Access Program for Health and Social Services Still in Limbo

For years, the QCGN along with its members and stakeholders have been concerned about the provision of health and social services in English – a right that is conditionally guaranteed in Quebec's health act which states: "*English-speaking persons are entitled to receive health services and social services in the English*

348.”

While most of Quebec's public institutions must develop a program of access to English-language health services and social services for the English-speaking population they serve, most access programs do not guarantee access to the full range of health and social services in English. Almost all private providers providing publicly funded health and social services, such as private medical offices, pharmaceutical services, and certain types of institutional services such as foster homes and intermediary resources, do not have contracts with public institutions that guarantee their services will be available in English.

The Act also calls for the creation of an advisory committee to advise the government on the provision of health services and social services in the English language as well as the approval, evaluation, and modification of access programs developed by institutions in accordance with the Act. The committee is titled the **Provincial Committee for the Provision of Health Services and Social Services in the English Language**, often referred to as the Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) or the Provincial Access Committee.

At its last Board meeting, the QCGN met with **Sheilagh Murphy** and **Terry Kaufman**, former members of the Provincial Advisory Committee for an update on state of access to health and social services and the work of the disbanded committee.

Since Bill 10, which modified the organization and governance of the health and social services network in 2015, the committee also intervenes in the approval of requests made by integrated health and social services centres for withdrawal of recognition of official bilingual status of institutions. It also takes part in the identification of organizations that promote the interests of English speakers in each region for the appointment of members of regional committees for access programs. QCGN's Bill 10 committee, which included the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSN) and multiple other health care stakeholders, also intervened to ensure a change to the regulation that makes it possible, and indeed preferable, for the committee to consult the English-speaking community on where, when, and how services should be delivered to English speakers across the province.

Members of the 2018-2021 Provincial Advisory Committee completed the mammoth task of reviewing the 29 access programs submitted by public institutions to the ministry in 2019 and 2020 and provided a professional opinion on each to the ministry. These represent the first access programs submitted to the government in a decade, and the first programs for institutions created by the Bill 10 mergers in 2015.

With this information in hand, last summer the government quietly announced its intention to review and restructure the committee. In December 2021, it published a new regulation that adjusted community representation and places more control particularly in the area of communications in the hands of the Minister and ministry officials. It also terminated the mandates of current members and, many months later in late spring 2022, the government appointed a new committee. Meanwhile, access programs that are at the very centre of the right of English-speaking Quebecers to gain access to services in their own language, have yet to be approved, and the government has not published many of the reports or the global opinion of the former committee regarding access programs.

Key findings of the PAC's global opinion included the lack of client data by preferred language of service, the critical need for better system coordination, and ensuring that those in precarious emergency situations and those who are vulnerable and require services in English are provided to them in an scientific, human, and socially appropriate manner. The committee also noted a large gap in guaranteed access to services in English for those vulnerable community members living in residential care facilities and formally requested that the access programs be adjusted so that the percentage of publicly funded service providers offering these services was closer to the percentage of the English-speaking population (13 per cent versus the less than 1 per cent found in access programs).

Faced with government inaction on access programs and advice from the Provincial Advisory Committee, the QCGN in collaboration with some former members of the committee decided to share details of their recommendations and the global opinion that was submitted to the government. We have updated the **Health and Social Services page** of our website with a section regarding the committee and linked to the documents to provide access to this vital information to English-speaking Quebecers.

Meanwhile QCGN's Board of Directors resolved to work closely with former members of the Provincial Advisory Committee and the **Coalition for Quality Health and Social Services** as well as any other interested stakeholders to develop an intervention strategy on Health and Social Services. The goal is to

other stakeholders and to ensure public information and education. The QCGN is reaching out to potential partners to develop a game plan to deal with the challenges of accessing health and social services for all. Members and stakeholders were vocal on health care issues during last week's meetings with Minister Petitpas Taylor, who was in town for her consultation on the next Action Plan to support official language minority communities.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESS NEEDS FOR NEXT ACTION PLAN



By Riley Dalys-Fine

QCGN Manager Community Outreach and Engagement

This summer is shaping up to be a busy one for QCGN members and stakeholder groups. As the cross-Canada consultation tour led by Official Languages Minister **Ginette Petitpas Taylor** makes its way through Quebec, our community's organizations have been out in full force to express their needs for the next Action Plan on Official Languages.

Dozens of community representatives participated in last week's consultations in **Montreal** and **Sherbrooke**. Together we sent a clear message to Minister Petitpas Taylor regarding the issues that must be addressed for our community to remain vital.

### Funding to Community Organizations at Stake

Of central concern in this process is how Bill C-13 will shape the next Action Plan, and in particular what kind of support our community will have access to through that framework. The Action Plan is being built upon the orientations set out in the White Paper ***English and French: Towards a Substantive Equality of Canada's Official Languages***, presented by former Official Languages Minister Melanie Joly in 2021. The reform paper was a precursor to Bill C-32, now Bill C-13. As such, one of the Action Plan's guiding principles is to support key institutions of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). One of the issues is that, here in Quebec, most of our institutions, with the possible exception of school boards, are administered by the province. Coupled with an increased focus on protecting and promoting French across Canada, the consultation process has many English-speaking community organizations wondering where they fit into the next Action Plan.

"When you talk about institutions, do not imagine that this money comes under the control and management of the English-speaking community of Quebec," commented QCGN Past-President **Marlene Jennings** in Montreal. "We must enlarge the definition of institutions to include community-based organizations that directly provide services to English speakers."

This issue, and related issues, were manifested in a variety of ways throughout the consultation. Different organizations, regions, populations, and sectors of activity are all impacted differently.

"Programming available to our minority community is largely constructed for French-speaking communities outside of Quebec," explained QCGN Director General **Sylvia Martin-Laforge**. "Our community has always

cookie-cutter approach to continue.”

“Our issues are long-standing and must be redressed in the next Action Plan,” she added, noting that “the QCGN will continue to ensure our stakeholders have a strong presence in these discussions.”



## Community Development Plan 2022-2027

Our community’s message in the federal consultation process is bolstered by the creation of the **Community Development Plan 2022-2027**, which was validated by the Community Roundtables at the end of June. Four Roundtables convened more than 30 community organizations to address common issues and develop collective strategies to achieve together what we cannot accomplish on our own. These Roundtables are mandated to develop a shared strategic plan corresponding to four areas of community development: data, funding, representation, as well as organizational and network health.

The Community Development Plan was first shared with stakeholders from across English-speaking Quebec at our March 15 Community Forum. Participants validated the approach taken by the Roundtables, while providing essential feedback on the framework and proposed strategies. The Roundtables are integrating this feedback into an updated Plan which will be shared with the community later this summer.

Action Plan consultations represent an important milestone in our community development process and are a focal point for collective action. Over the next few weeks, the Roundtables will use the Community Development Plan as the basis for a report which will be submitted to the Department of Canadian Heritage detailing what programs, initiatives, and investments are needed in the next Action Plan to support our community’s vitality.

An overview of the Community Development Plan, as well as this report, will be shared with stakeholders at a Community Forum taking place **September 9**. Stay tuned for details!

If you would like to get involved in our Community Roundtables, I encourage you to contact me at [riley.dalys-fine@qcgnc.ca](mailto:riley.dalys-fine@qcgnc.ca).

## QCGN LAUNCHES ACCESS TO JUSTICE WEBSITE

English-speaking Quebecers have a new way to learn about their rights to access services in English in Quebec, and to share the experiences they have had in trying to do so.

**QCGN's Access to Justice** project manager **Mitra Thompson** unveiled the QCGN’s Access to Justice in English project’s web presence at our Policy Forum in June. (View the **launch** on the QCGN’s YouTube

online tool informs, consults, and interacts on justice issues that have an impact on Quebec's English-speaking community. In addition to accessing information about rights and a large directory of legal and community resources, she said the website aims to foster two-way

communication with English-speaking Quebecers. Visitors are invited to share their experiences of accessing services in English in Quebec by taking a short survey.

"One critical way in which these experiences will be heard is through the **Bill 96 Impact Awareness questionnaire**, which invites individuals to share how they are being impacted by elements of this legislation," Thompson added. The impact awareness questionnaire, which has received more than 100 responses to date, is at the forefront of efforts by the QCGN to follow the implementation of Bill 96 and document the impact it is having on individual Quebecers.

"What do we mean by impact? It could be a change in plans for education; work, or place of residence; an unexpected financial burden; challenges related to education or employment; difficulties communicating with the Quebec government or accessing Quebec government services due to language barriers; or any other tangible impact that you or an immediate family member have experienced," she said.

Quebecers aged 18 or over who have been impacted by an element of the Bill are invited to complete the **questionnaire**. Please feel free to share the link to the questionnaire with anyone who has been negatively affected by Bill 96. The **Access to Justice site** can be accessed through the **QCGN's website** or at **qcgnjustice.ca**.



## ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENGLISH

## QAHN AWARDS GO TO MARGARET PHILLIPS AND FOSSMOBILE ENTERPRISES

Submitted by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network



This year, the **Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network** presented its prestigious Marion Phelps Award to Margaret Phillips, volunteer president of Cantley 1889, a heritage group in the Gatineau Valley. The 2022 Richard Evans Award went to Fossmobile Enterprises of Burlington, Ontario.

The Marion Phelps Award is presented annually by QAHN in recognition of outstanding long-term contributions by an individual to the preservation and promotion of Anglophone heritage in the province of Quebec.

Phillips has been a creative force in preserving and promoting heritage in the Gatineau Valley for over 20 years, said QAHN's Awards Committee. Most recently, she has been active researching and writing material for the Parc du Traversier plaque project, which commemorates Cantley's ferry service that was active from about 1850 to 1927.

In 2010, Phillips was the founding president of Cantley 1889. She has also served as a board member of the Gatineau Valley Historical Society (GVHS) on several occasions, and as a member on numerous project committees. Her many projects have included the preservation of the Blackburn Pioneer Cemetery in Cantley, Quebec, where an interpretive plaque was unveiled in 2021. She has also served as chair of the Tugboat team project, and as a member of the virtual museum committee, the natural heritage committee and the Sculpted Rocks committee. Her wide-ranging interests illustrate her concern for all aspects of local history and its strong connection to the natural world.

Phillips said that she was "humbled and very honoured" by the recognition. "We're a small grass-roots heritage group, and if it wasn't for all of my cohorts and colleagues, this would never have happened. I'm so grateful to QAHN for recognizing us and honouring us this way. It's made such a difference."



community to visit and learn about our first pioneers... I'm just really overwhelmed."

## Canada's first horseless carriage

Accepting the Richard Evans Award, which recognizes outstanding long-term contributions by an organization or group of volunteers to the preservation and promotion of Anglophone heritage in the province of Quebec, was Ron Foss. He created Fossmobile Enterprises in 2018 as a way of paying tribute to his grandfather George Foote Foss, a Sherbrooke native who built the "Fossmobile," Canada's first gasoline-powered car in 1896.

Since its creation, Fossmobile Enterprises has worked tirelessly to raise public awareness about George Foote Foss and his groundbreaking automobile. Led by Ron Foss with support from members of the Foss family, the group spent countless volunteer hours researching the Fossmobile. They gathered advice and collaborated with automotive historians, restorers and other supporters in an effort to "reverse-engineer" a replica of the now long-lost Fossmobile, of which no plans (and only photographs) exist.

To build that "tribute car," the team had to raise tens of thousands of dollars from a range of government sources, organizations, and individuals. Years of work have now paid off, however, and the Fossmobile tribute car was unveiled in Burlington, Ontario, in April. A special community event is scheduled for Sherbrooke later this summer.

The year 2022 marks the 125th anniversary of the original Fossmobile created by George Foote Foss, a machinist, bicycle repairman and inventor in Sherbrooke. In the winter of 1896, Foss started to build a gasoline-powered "horseless carriage". Completed in 1897, it was the first of its kind in Canada.

Although all traces of the Fossmobile are long gone, Ron Foss and his team of volunteers and supporters created their replica by carefully scrutinizing old photos, and using a combination of authentic period parts and newly manufactured ones. The tribute car will eventually be donated to the Canadian Automotive Museum in Oshawa, Ontario.

That tribute to Foss's legacy will help to right an aspect of Canada's technical and industrial heritage that has been largely overlooked. It is appropriate that this 19th century Eastern Townships automobile pioneer should be acknowledged, and his invention brought back to life.



Ron Foss said that he was "extremely honoured" and "grateful for the recognition. I believe a lot of the recognition belongs with my grandfather... and I know that we join a long line of previous Award winners."

Congratulating Foss for his efforts, QAHN president Grant Myers spoke about "the rich cultural heritage of Quebec's English-speaking communities. "We sometimes forget that there's a diaspora across the country and the world that reflects that heritage, and you're part of it, and we're pleased to welcome your family back to its roots."

The prizes were awarded during QAHN's Annual General Meeting, held via Zoom, on Saturday, June 11.

## CELEBRATING THE QUEBEC FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS' 2022 HEROES IN EDUCATION

Submitted by Karen Henchey  
QFHSA Communications Officer



important stage: the student, the teacher, the parent, the administrator, and the innovator.

The QFHSA opened its 78th Annual General Meeting on June 2nd with an awards ceremony celebrating exceptional advocates for Quebec education at both the local and provincial levels. One of the QFHSA's major awards, the Gordon Paterson Award, recognizes outstanding educators who have long given service to Quebec education and have encouraged the participation of parents.

### Noel Burke

During his remarkable career, Noel has taken on many roles with incredible skill and dedication. His creative and innovative mind always seeks new and better approaches to think, learn, teach, and support Quebec education. Noel's career in education began in the early '70s when he taught secondary school at James Lyng High. His teaching career continues to this day, only now his pupils are graduate students at McGill's Faculty of Education.

Noel's administrative career spans decades as well. Although many remember him as the former chair of the **Lester B. Pearson School Board**, Noel has dedicated much of his professional life to Quebec's English school boards, filling a variety of positions over the years. A former Assistant-Deputy Minister of Education to Quebec's Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport, Noel also has the distinction of being the founding dean of Concordia University's School of Extended Learning.

Always an innovator, Noel was instrumental in the conception and development of the Community Learning Centres initiative. He is also the co-founder of the NEXTschool initiative with Michael Canuel, the director of **LEARN**. NEXTschool envisions a new interdisciplinary and holistic approach to high-school learning, an approach that will undoubtedly have an important impact on the future of Quebec education.



### Cathrine (Kate) Le Maistre



Kate has also had a wonderful career in education—a career fuelled by her unwavering passion, commitment, and dedication to students, teachers, parents, schools, and our community.

Early on, she taught in schools in Manitoba and Quebec. Then, with young children at home, Kate returned to student life herself, completing first a Master of Education degree and then a PhD. This was the beginning of a long and productive career at McGill University where she has inspired generations of new teachers. At McGill's Faculty of Education, Kate was promoted to the position of tenured Associate Professor and served as Associate Dean. She has also served as the Director of Undergraduate Studies, a position that involved revising and implementing teacher-training programs.

From 2007 until her retirement in 2021, Kate was the chair of the **Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE)**, a job she describes as "the biggest thing in my life for the last 14 years—academically speaking." Established in 1993 at the recommendation of the Task Force on English Education, ABEE is responsible for advising the Minister of Education on issues affecting the educational services rendered in English elementary and secondary schools. During her tenure, Kate insisted that every part of the province be represented at ABEE—communities to the north, south, east, and west. She also ensured that parents and Indigenous peoples had a voice at the table.

In addition to being lifelong supporters of education, both Kate and Noel have been lifelong supporters of parents, recognizing the essential role they play in their children's education and school life. Kate explains: "We as parents and grandparents are their longest-serving teachers and it's so important to hear the parent's voice." Noel shares Kate's deep appreciation of parents and the important role they play. He recalls his own days sitting on governing boards, where he witnessed the wonderful work parents do to support their school communities.

*For more information about the QFHSA and its activities, we invite you to visit our website, <http://www.qfhsa.org>, and follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*

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