



THE VOICE OF
THE PARENT IN
EDUCATION

QFHSA NEWS

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Parent Involvement—Why it's so very Important



As parents, it is natural for you to want to do everything that you can to improve the quality of education – both curricular and extra-curricular- offered to your children and the other students in the schools which they attend. What steps can you undertake to make your parent involvement as efficient as possible?

Firstly, be present and actively participate in as many meetings open to parents at the schools where your children attend as possible. Make sure that you are a member in good standing with your local home and school association by paying your membership fee and by attending and participating in meetings on a regular basis. Volunteer as often as you can for the activities sponsored by your local home and school association. Each school has a governing board, and its meetings are open to all parents and the public at large. There is provision for a question and answer period on the meeting agendas. Consider sitting in one.

Secondly, school board meetings of the council of commissioners are open to all parents and the public at large. There is provision for a question and answer period on the meeting agendas. If you wish to present a short message, contact the office of the secretary-general of the school board to learn the procedure for being able to do so.

Your QFHSA Rights, Education and Resolutions Committee members monitored with great interest the introduction of Education Bill 86 by Francois Blais, Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research on December 4th, 2015. The QFHSA Brief on Bill 86 was presented before the National Assembly Committee on Culture and Education on March 22nd, 2016 in Québec City.

Fortunately, Sébastien Proulx, the new Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports introduced Bill 105 – An Act to Amend the Education Act on June 9th, 2016. A QFHSA Letter to the Minister of Education and the Committee on Culture and Education on Bill 105 was received at the National Assembly of Québec on September 19th, 2016.

IMPORTANT DATE TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Please make sure that you reserve Saturday, November 5th, 2016 for the QFHSA Fall Conference 2016 at Beaconsfield High School. Front and centre: a plenary session panel discussion on the controversial Curriculum of History of Québec and Canada – keynote speaker Nakuset, plenary session panel discussion, workshops, regional council meetings, lunch, and so much more! It is extremely important for parents to be there to actively participate in this educational conference!

Yours in education,

Brian Rock



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A message from the Executive Director



This year's Fall Conference will focus on the need to have a more truthful and inclusive narrative in the History of Quebec and Canada curriculum taught in our schools. It must include the valuable historical contributions of our minority communities, as well as that of our First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.

The need to have an education system that is truthful and sensitive to minority communities has not been just a recent thought. It has been an idea that goes way back. For example, the **education and welfare of "Indian and Eskimo children" had been a concern of the Canadian Home and School and Parent Teacher Federation** as far back as 1946, but no representations were made to the federal government until April of 1964 when the CHSPTF leadership presented a brief to the Honourable René Tremblay, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Honourable Arthur Laing, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It was followed by a proposed draft declaration of the "human rights of the Indian in Canada" (modeled on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights) at the Charlottetown Annual Meeting that summer. In 1965, Federation President Jack Sands and Chairman of the Brief Committee, Max Bedford, reiterated to the Ministers the Federation's commitment to equal opportunity in education for "Indian and Eskimo children" and recommended Home and School associations be established on reserves, so that parents could become more involved in their children's schools.

Indeed, part of the preparations for the Canada Centennial Year in 1967 included strong support for projects promoting the welfare of Indian and Eskimo children as well as a major project involving children's reading and school libraries. Home and School associations, such as those in Ontario, collected, sorted and packed thousands of books and publications for the use of First Nation schools on Manitoulin Island, at the Toronto Indian Centre, Moosonee, Nakina on Lake Superior, and Cape Croker.

The National Committee developed a program of study and actions in the form of the Tillicum (Friendship) Kit which gave information on Indian and Eskimo communities and traditions and suggested activities for Home and School associations. That was more than 50 years ago and individual Home and Schools did address their concerns in their own way. It was not until the Truth and Reconciliation Commission began its work in 2008 that a bright light was shed upon the true state of **Canada's First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities and in particular their children and youth. The Nation's attention has been truly captured by the work of this commission. The final report of this Commission was launched in 2015.**

The on-going challenge, then, is to keep the spot light on this issue, until we can all see that profound improvements have been made, and equality of opportunity has been achieved in the education and well-being of all young people in Canada. The QFHSA urges everyone to come to Fall Conference as one of the first steps in learning more about what needs to be done, and what your association can do! Be informed!

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.

Membership Services

Welcome back! I hope you all had time over the summer to recharge your batteries and to enjoy some “non-school” time. If you are new to the school, please get involved with and support your Home and School Association even if you are not able to volunteer. You will meet so many people and will be kept informed of school activities and projects.



If you are a new or returning executive member please remember that you can call the QFHSA for information on procedures, resources, etc.

On the “To-Do” List

<i>Documents</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
2015-2016 President’s Report	June 30th (now overdue)
2015-2016 Treasurer’s Report	June 30th (now overdue)
2016-2017 Executive List	ASAP
\$50.00 Administration Fee	September 30th
Local Association Renewal Form	September 30th
First Batch of Membership Fees and List	October 31st

All forms are on the QFHSA website. We have also added a sample charitable receipts request tracking form and an insurance request form. Please note that the QFHSA office needs 7 -10 days to process an insurance form.

Membership News: The QFHSA would like to welcome two new Home and School Associations to the QFHSA family. Welcome to Butler Elementary (Eastern Townships School Board) and Children’s World Academy (Lester B. Pearson School Board).

Have a great year!

Marlyn Brownrigg
 QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator
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 Toll Free: 1-888-808-5619

WELCOME

The QFHSA would like to welcome Sheila Desormeaux as our new Office Assistant.

Sheila’s Home and School experience will be a great asset to our organization.

2017 AGM

Mark your calendars! The 2017 AGM will be April 29, 2017 at the Novotel Montreal Airport

From the Archives

News & Views from the Past: Spotlight 1966

The QFHSA archives are a wealth of information, and once they are completely organized, will be a valuable resource for generations to come.

Let's go back to the QFHSA NEWS, 50 years ago, to 1966 and see what were the main concerns of Home and School parents at that time. Not surprisingly, education was as big a topic as ever, as the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec (the Parent Commission) had come out in 1962, with many recommendations to overhaul the education system in Quebec. The QFHSA had been busy with its "Operation Bootstraps" an ambitious project that gathered information over two years (1959-61) from local association study groups on seventeen different topics ranging from curriculum, finance, teachers, guidance counselling, teaching of French, vocational instruction, to name a few. By the time the Quebec Government introduced the Royal Commission on Education in 1962, QFHSA was ready with a 45,000 word brief.

As reported in the July 1966 issue of the Quebec Home and School News (p. 3), Joseph L. Pagé, Associate Deputy Minister of Education, addressing the Federation's Annual Meeting, had this to say:

Perhaps it is sufficient for me to say that you represent a large and important section of society in this province and, because you are concerned, are well-informed, articulate, and involved in the life of your schools and your community, your influence is well beyond the ratio which your membership bear to the population as a whole.

I can say, though, that your studies and the recommendations you made public during the recent years have not only been remarkably similar to those which were later put forward in the Parent report, but also reflected closely many of the principles and decisions which motivated the establishment of the new Department of Education, exactly two years ago.

For example, your "Operation Bootstraps", which preceded "Operation 5" by five years, quite evidently was based on the principles later advocated by the department in its employment of discussion, consultation and knowledge as a means for coming to conclusions and realistic planning. In "Operation Bootstraps" you set out to probe the strengths and weaknesses of the existing education system in order that your opinions concerning possible improvements might have a foundation on solid fact.

(Continued on page 21)

Literacy Committee

Summer News

Books, books, books – the QFHSA board room has been hijacked! Thanks to the Lester B. Pearson School Board, Library and Digital Resource Centre, the QFHSA will be able to redistribute 20 boxes of books selected by Meg Sinclair, School Board Librarian and other Board library technicians. Committee members Marion Daigle and Marlyn Brownrigg pre-sorted and transported the books while a team of volunteers spent a day at the QFHSA office getting them ready to be distributed. These books will be sent to outlying regions in Québec either to Home and Schools, small schools or community libraries.

How can your Home and School Help? If your Home and School has *unused Scholastic credits* maybe you would like to partner with a smaller Home and School so that books may be purchased for their school library and classrooms? Libraries are funded on a per-student basis so small schools receive very little funding. Please contact Marlyn for more information.

Born-to-Read: Has your Home and School considered starting this program? Fall is the time to start planning. For more information contact the QFHSA office.

Libraries: The QFHSA believes in the power of the written word and has been promoting literacy for many years. How about making your school library a welcoming place by decorating it for special occasions or by having a monthly theme?

Librarians don't have time to do this but may appreciate Home and School's creative input.
(See article on page 14)



Marion Daigle, member of the QFHSA Literacy Committee, sorts books at the LBPSB's Library and Digital Resource Centre.

Grow A Garden, Engage Your Children/Students in Their Health & Learning

By Dr. Sheryl Beller-Kenner

The Canadian Heart & Stroke Foundation recognizes that schools are an ideal setting to promote healthy eating among children in a multi-dimensional way through the foods that are available, nutrition policies, health curricula, and teacher- and peer-modeling. And school gardening programs are currently the simplest and most popular way of making that happen!

School-based gardens have demonstrated positive aspects contributing to nutrition education and improving vegetable and fruit intake among students. The Canadian Feed The Children Organization recognizes that school-based garden programs have the following benefits: increasing knowledge about proper nutrition and equipping children to reach the wider community, including parents, with information about proper nutrition and healthy eating; connecting children to their environment, sensitizing them to the issues, and equipping them with the practical skills for sustainability and ecology; and inspiring a sense of community belonging and pride. As noted in *Making It Happen: Healthy Eating At School* (healthyeatingschool.ca), various other research reports highlight the following additional benefits: an increased willingness to taste new vegetables, and an increase in fruit and vegetable intake; reinforcement of nutrition lessons in the class; improved academic performance; an opportunity for light to moderate physical activity; increased self-understanding and a sense of self-empowerment; improved life-skills; and improved teamwork and relationships with others.

Community-gardens can be found in schools serving different age levels all over Canada; a few examples are: Elsipogtog First Nation School, New Brunswick; Bayview Community School, British Columbia; Argyle Alternative High School, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Macdonald Drive Elementary, St. John's, Newfoundland; St. Andrew Junior School, Antigonish, Nova Scotia; Central Technical School, Toronto, Ontario; St. Francis School Greenhouse in Harbour Grace, NL; Montague Regional High School, Montague, Prince Edward Island; and Canora Junior Elementary School, Canora, Saskatchewan. Educational systems in across Canada are supporting the school garden initiatives, but community gardens are not limited to large, private, exclusive schools or to schools with lots of land. In fact, gardening programs can illuminate small school and Home and School based programs, too.

Consider the indoor Tower Garden, a vertical, aeroponic system! The greatest success story with Tower Gardening

that I'm aware of is the Green Bronx Machine program in Bronx, New York, USA, (<http://greenbronxmachine.org/>) where teacher Stephen Ritz started creatively using a few Tower Gardens in a high school classroom in 2009 as the highlight of a project-based, authentic learning program. The Bronx is one of the toughest, low-income, blighted areas in all of New York, and academic successes there had been dismal. Ritz documented some fabulous results. From the inception of the initial program, their targeted kids experienced an increase from 40% to 93% class attendance,

"We believe that healthy students are at the heart of healthy schools, and healthy schools are at the heart of healthy communities. By integrating plant-based teaching with core school curriculum, we grow healthy food, healthy students and healthy academic performance." - Stephen Ritz

a 100% graduation rate, and 100% employment or post-secondary opportunities. In the 2015 – 2016 school year there was a 45% increase in passing rates of students (which included special needs and English as a second language learners) on NYS 4th Grade Science Exams, along with a 50% reduction in behavioural incidents and out-of-class time.

The Tower Garden program can be used for learning in all grades and all areas of the curriculum such as: nutrition & health care, botany, conservation & other green initiatives, mathematics & measuring, record-keeping, geology, business & business management, cooking, reading & vocabulary, and art; it can be used to improve skills in inquiry, contextualization, planning, prediction, analysis, and team work. Older students can teach what they learn to younger students, and they can enjoy reporting their results on the latest media. Students can use their products to feed themselves healthy food (even bringing home bags of food for their families); in fact, the number of students taking vegetables increased in the Green Bronx Machine program by about 240%. In addition, they stocked the

school cafeteria, donated to the community, and even sold to local restaurants. **Steven Ritz's programs are so successful that he has been invited around the world to share them.** On May 10, 2016, he officially opened a transformed 60 x 25 foot empty library in a 100+ year old school now known as the National Health, Wellness & Learning Center at Community School 55 in the South Bronx, a showcase for schools the world over. He has partnered with world-renowned chefs to build the Green Bronx Machine Mobile Classroom Kitchen where the students prepare meals direct from their Tower Garden Farm and can demonstrate every aspect of the center - including the solar- and people- powered energy stations. Through other partnerships, he started a summer Garden, Culinary & Career camp (imagine students volunteering to go to school during the summer!), and a media and resource centre for teachers and future educators. By being so engaged, these children move their learning out of their books and into nature, their homes, and their communities.



It's very easy to set up a Tower Garden program at home with one Tower, or as part of a Home and School program at your local school. One basic Tower kit, which is completely self-contained and soil-free, takes up about 2.5 square feet of space and 30 minutes to set up, can grow 20 different plants. The kit contains everything that one needs (Tower Garden; pump, timer and drain tube; seed starting supplies, including germination tray, rock-wool cubes, vermiculite, net pots, and 5 different, non-GMO seeds; plant food; and pH test kit and one bottle each of pH adjusters; optional items include, light kit, tomato cage, wheels, and 8-plant extension) to grow a successful fruit & vegetable garden indoors or outdoors -- all year long! Parents, teachers, and children can incorporate all aspects of set-up, maintenance, and harvesting into multiple aspects of any given curriculum. Because the plants receive optimal conditions of light, water, and nutrition, plants grow more quickly, become larger, and produce more fruits and veggies than they do in a conventional garden. The best part, to me, is that the children like to - and can - eat the produce right off of the Tower!



Grant programs, strategic alliances, and creative ways of fund-raising can help you get started, and many school programs use the fruits (and vegetables) of their labour to raise money for other programs, taking a group trip, getting supplies, or funding other learning activities. For a minimal amount of effort and support from your Home and School program, students can benefit from all of the advantages that a school gardening program offers: increased engagement in learning activities; more project-based, real-life activities; improved student performance; AND better health. The more you can inspire and excite your children, the more that they will engage in life. In addition to educating your children, a Tower Garden Project can encourage healthy habits and academic success and ensure that you grow something greater. Consider being one of the first schools in Quebec to have tower gardens!



Dr. Sheryl Beller-Kenner, formerly of the Bronx, NY, started her teaching career in New York City's toughest school districts. She is currently a naturopath, holistic health instructor, and director of BelArome Holistic Health Centre in Montreal, where the focus of her work is on the four basic foundations to good health: stress reduction, improved nutrition, movement, and a healthy living environment. You can visit her Tower Garden in her office and have a bite of whatever's growing! She can help you set up a garden for yourself or your school program. Contact her at 514.481.9355 or sheryl@belarome.ca



QFHSA Fall Conference: HandS Working Together for Education



When: November 5, 2016

Where: Beaconsfield High School
250 Beaurepaire Drive
Beaconsfield, Québec H9W 5G7

Keynote Speaker: Nakuset

Some people are born to empower others and some have it thrust upon them...

So seems to be the case of Nakuset, this year's QFHSA Fall Conference Keynote Speaker.

Nakuset has become one of the most visible spokespersons for the Aboriginal community in Montreal, because she has been compelled to rise to the challenge, wherever and whenever it has appeared. She serves as the executive director of the Montreal Native Women's Shelter (MNWS), and co-president of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network. In addition, she hosts a community TV show Indigenous Power, a series that portrays urban Aboriginal Montrealers in a positive light by highlighting their strengths and leadership within the community as artists, musicians, scholars, and professionals.

Part of the "Sixties Scoop", she and her sister Sonya were taken without permission from their Cree parents' home in Thompson, Manitoba and were put up for adoption. Although Sonya was eventually returned to their parents, Nakuset herself was adopted and raised by a Jewish family in Montreal. She struggled with her identity for many years until she could come to terms with being a Jewish Indian. She has since been in contact with Sonya, and very recently, both have been reunited with their youngest sister, Rose Mary, who had been living in Austria since she was 3 years old.

At least 20,000 and most likely many more, aboriginal children were scooped up from family homes on reserves between 1960 and 1985 and sent to live with non-aboriginal families across Canada. In some cases, newborn babies were literally taken from their mothers while recovering from childbirth in hospital and just given away.

Although the trauma experienced by both children and parents seems unimaginable to us, as the executive director of the Montreal Native Women's Shelter, Nakuset is in a position to counsel other women who struggle with similar experiences. Although her resilience and that of other aboriginal women is an inspiration to us all it will be through knowledge of the truth of the Aboriginal experience in Canada that we can guard against families being torn apart in such a manner ever again.



Fall Conference Workshops

Uncovering the mysteries of anxiety with Debbie Oestreich

We all know what anxiety feels like. The jangling nerves hide below the surface as it presents in a variety of shapes and colours in us humans. **The child's experience will be explored** on a psychological, emotional, physiological and social level from a developmental attachment angle with the help of both neuroscience and open discussion. Consultant Debbie Oestreich will be offering a workshop to look at the reality of **stress in our busy children's lives** today while offering a place to ask questions and consider solutions.



Debbie Oestreich is a Montreal based human behaviour consultant who embraces the developmental attachment paradigm with Dr. Gordon Neufeld. L.I.N.C's revolutionary look at the maturation process slots it in a different category than the current mental health interventions out there today. Learning Inner Needs of Children's (L.I.N.C) approach supports parents, individuals, couples, teachers, daycare providers, etc. in their efforts to enjoy healthy relationships, understand their children and/or spouses while living guilt free lives.

Mission Driven Volunteering with Heather Darch

What is the future of volunteering?

Healthy organizations depend on active volunteers to deliver all kinds of vital community services, yet many organizations today are struggling to find the people they need to carry out their mission.

Be inspired by the story of one rural community organization transformed by the switch to micro-volunteering

As told by Heather Darch
Curator of the Missisquoi Museum and
Projects Manager for the Quebec
Anglophone Heritage Network.



Heather Darch is the Curator of the Missisquoi Museum, one of the oldest museums in the Eastern Townships. Since 2012 she has been working as a co-project manager in a variety of projects for the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) including the current "Volunteer's Matter" conference series. She has written numerous articles about Missisquoi County's historic past and is a regular contributor to the Townships' news magazine "Le Tour."

Cultivating and Enhancing Self-Esteem

Self Esteem is a major key to success in life. People with high Self Esteem are effective, productive, and confident. They are more easily able to respond to others in a positive way; to form nurturing relationships; and to cope with their successes and failures – including surviving mistakes, disappointments, their own limitations, and even rejection by others. Self Esteem is linked to our culture, family values, and how we see ourselves. Come join us to learn more about cultivating and enhancing your **child's Self Esteem!**



DEB KELLMAN, MEd, and MONA SEGAL, MSW MEd, are educational consultants and therapists. In their company DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES, they have had the privilege to support many individuals, couples, families, and youth as they reach their goals in the home, school, daycare, and work environments. DM provides couple therapy, family therapy, individual therapy for children toddlers to teens; parenting courses, parent support, social skills groups for youth of all ages, and in-school services from early childhood to university and workplace settings.

Introduction to Quebec Reading Connection

How do you choose the best books for your children? How can you get the most out of discussing a book with your child?

Join an expert teacher and parent as she walks participants through the way she approaches selecting texts using the site Quebec Reading Connection, a new online database of children's literature.

Participants will also learn how to do a “picture walk”, a way of examining and discussing a book with your child before reading to activate prior knowledge, stimulate discussion and deepen comprehension.

Come for a guided tour and discover the latest in recommended books. Explore activities and discussions tailored for parents.



Kathryn Byrne has been sharing her love of books and literacy as a certified teacher in Ontario and Quebec since 2002. She currently works as a teacher at Christmas Park Elementary School and as the Elementary Program Specialist at the MEES project, Quebec Reading Connection. Her three children attend elementary school in the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

QFHSA Fall Conference Plenary Panel Discussion

Learning the Lessons of History Creating a New Narrative for Canada

Changes to the History and Social Studies curricula at both the elementary and secondary levels are being examined across Canada. How much of our history has been ignored or left out entirely? One clear example involves Canada's behind the scenes true relationship with its Indigenous peoples. The time for truth and reconciliation is long overdue.

An exciting panel of educators will give us their perspectives on why changing our narrative is necessary to understanding who we are as a nation. Our children deserve a legacy of truth in the telling.

Panel Guests



Simon Jacobs—Moderator
President, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network

After joining the Quebec Symphony Orchestra in 1989 as a violist, Simon Jacobs changed careers in 2009, becoming the executive director of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

In 2005, Simon founded Exposition Shalom Quebec which researched and produced an exhibition on the Jewish community of Quebec City that was showcased for the 400th anniversary of Quebec City in 2008. Held in the Gare du Palais, it was viewed by more than 30,000 visitors. The exhibition then moved on to the Museum of Religions in Nicolet and, finally Montreal in 2009. Simon has been a member of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network Board of Directors since 2009, and the president since 2013. In 2015, he and Pierre Ancil published a book called *Les Juifs de Quebec* that reveals the rich history of four hundred years in Quebec through a series of essays and archival photographs.



Robert Green—Panelist

Robert Green is a teacher and Senior Social Sciences Department Head at Westmount High School. He has taught the History of Canada and Quebec secondary 3 & 4 course of study and is an outspoken critic of the current History Curriculum. He believes that Quebec needs a history curriculum that is focused on its francophone majority, yet inclusive of the significant contributions of its minority communities. It also needs a curriculum that addresses the long standing injustices endured by First Nations communities and identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He currently teaches the Contemporary World course. He is a regular contributor to the Montreal Gazette, Richochet Media, and CJAD's Tommy Schnurmacher Show. He also blogs at MontrealTeachers4Change.org



Kevin Ka'nahsohon Deer—Panelist

Faithkeeper, Mowhawk from Kahnawake

Currently employed as a school teacher at the Karonhianonhnha Mohawk Immersion School since 1989. In the older traditional teachings in the Longhouse he is also a Faithkeeper and helps to perform the ceremonies, songs, speeches, and dances of the Mohawk people. He is also a resource person on Iroquoian world view, philosophy, treaties, land claims, and native-European historical perspectives. He has been deeply involved in the Mohawk language and spiritual revitalization of his nation for the past thirty six years.

He has been extensively involved in peace negotiations, police relations, and is an active motivational speaker. He offers his knowledge and wisdom of First Nation faith and history to an assortment of organizations and events. He enjoys discussing life and is always open to learning new ways of knowing.



Dr. Dorothy Williams —Panelist

Dr. Williams' relevant education includes Masters in History and in Library Studies and a Doctorate in Library and Information Studies with a specialization in African Canadian Bibliography and Archives. She brings significant content about the African –Canadian experience. She has authored three books: Blacks in Montreal 1628-1986 – An Urban Demography, (1989); The Road to Now: A history of Blacks in Montreal, (1997); and finally, Les Noirs à Montréal, 1628-1986: essai de démographie urbaine. (1998) In addition she has authored several dozen articles focused primarily on aspects of Black History within Canada. She has given direction in projects and dossiers of several government departments, including the provincial Ministries of Education and Cultural Communities and Immigration and Heritage Canada. Blacbiblio.com Inc. was founded by Dr. Williams in 2006 to disseminate African-Canadian history and its cultural heritage. In 2016 **the ABC's of Canadian Black History Kit is its inaugural product.**

QFHSA Fall Conference: Literacy Workshop

Do the books in our schools reflect our society's diversity and cultural identities?

How does reading help young people understand themselves as well as their relationship to this rich and growing multicultural society called Canada?

Four dynamic librarians will share their knowledge, enthusiasm and experience in choosing stimulating reading resources to promote inclusiveness.



Beverly Graham graduated from Concordia University with a B.A. in History and a B.A. in Library Studies. She has been employed with the English Montreal School Board as a documentation technician since 1995 and is currently working at LaurenHill Academy (Junior Campus).

Having spent the majority of her career working with elementary-aged kids, it was a shock to the system to begin working exclusively with young teens at the junior high level! However, after six years, the best part of the job is being in the position to encourage her students to go beyond reading just one genre. For the past two years, she has coached the LaurenHill Academy team in the Lester B. Pearson Battle of the Books competition. Beverley also likes to boast (although she cannot prove it) that she has the largest graphic novel collection in any Montreal area school library.



Karihwaiénhne (Joanne) McGregor is the Library Technician at Karonhianónhna, the Mohawk Immersion School, Grades 1-6 in Kahnawake. She is a graduate of Dawson College (Social Science) and John Abbott College (Library Science, Public Relations.) Her background is heavily influenced in Mohawk culture and also in various genres in English literature. The school library contains information in both Kanien'kéha (Mohawk) and English.

Her storytelling is influenced by her father who taught his kids the art of storytelling using Mohawk history, omens and ghost stories. She firmly believes in stimulating children to read by any means necessary where they can create a doorway to experience a world in which they become the hero, villain or dragon. The power of imagination!



Ute Wilkinson is currently working as librarian for five elementary schools in the Lester B. Pearson school board. Previously, she worked in both a middle school and a high school. She has a keen interest in getting the right books into the right hands and spends much of her time both collecting and redistributing books to teachers, students, classrooms and special interest groups both within the school board and elsewhere. Her latest initiatives involve supporting various Croque-livres book boxes set up by teachers in the schools, and getting her own "Little Free Library" up and running.



Jennifer Woolley has joyfully been a school librarian for 30 years (High School and Elementary). With a passion for literacy and the transformative magic of books, she is convinced that a welcoming library is the perfect place to celebrate curiosity. She has been a consultant for Canadian content in libraries (Association of Canadian Publishers), the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal Taskforce on Multiculturalism, and is a member of Lakeside's Native Studies Committee. Jennifer encourages students to have a sense of ownership of their library experience by running a large monitor program culminating in the Annual Library Oscar Awards Ceremony. Library orientations double as homage to Jamaican culture, and she has special presentations on Black History titles and themes running throughout the year. Jennifer welcomes visits to her library!

IN GOOD COMPANY-Volunteer Canada Community Forum

By Carol Meindl



Volunteer Canada held its 2nd community building forum for businesses and non-profits on June 9-10 in Toronto. **This year's theme was Building Strong and Connected Communities.** Over 100 leaders from diverse regions and sectors came together to explore ways to strengthen business-community engagement and employer-supported volunteering in Canada.

Guest speakers presented on topics such as: Employer-supported volunteering (ESV); Engaging multi-generational workforces in ESV programs; Group volunteering and Skills-based and pro bono volunteering. Some of these discussions had ramifications for Home and Schools, even though it might not have been immediately apparent.

The whole idea of Employer-supported volunteering is one such concept. Often, Home and School Presidents **hear the same lament from potential volunteers, "I wish I could help but I work full time. I don't have time to volunteer for Home and School."** Many employees may not be aware that their place of employment might actually have a policy on releasing employees for community service.

"MANY EMPLOYEES MAY NOT BE AWARE THAT THEIR PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT MIGHT ACTUALLY HAVE A POLICY ON RELEASING EMPLOYEES FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE."

"Employer-supported volunteering encourages a company's staff to donate their time to community causes. It can be done on company time or supported through other company resources. Employee demand for corporate social responsibility (CSR) is growing. Strong CSR programs are an essential component of ethical business practices." - from the Volunteer Canada website (www.volunteer.ca)

And in cases where no policy currently exists, Volunteer Canada offers resources to help build your own employer supported volunteering program. One example that was cited was of that of a small company in Ottawa where the employees wanted to give back to their community through community service. They organized themselves and developed a plan where individuals could volunteer for two hours once a week in an elementary school library reading to the students. They budgeted time in the office so that pairs of employees could be absent at one time and the remaining staff could take care of their duties while they were away. When the plan was well developed and presented to the management, the employer agreed, as it was an opportunity for the company to show corporate social responsibility and it boosts office morale.

There are many events hosted by Home and School Associations that could use a number of extra hands to participate. Instead on just one member of the staff attending, perhaps several members could be released to work the event together, in exchange for official recognition of the contribution of the company. A win/win scenario!

So consider the possibility of asking a company to release employees to volunteer, as an alternative to asking for a monetary donation. The companies community profile could be raised much higher that way.

WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY BEING INFORMED AND SUPPORTIVE.

Another interesting idea that came from the discussion was that of the Spectrum of Volunteer Engagement. We so often look at the need to have physical bodies available to work our event as the most valuable contribution, and may overlook the many other ways individuals could

support our event or association. The spectrum of involvement ranges from being informed to being supportive to active participation to leadership. We should not underestimate the value of the school community being informed and supportive, even if they are not all able to be active participants or leaders themselves. If you are planning an event that promotes a particular cause, such as a bake sale to raise money for a beloved charity, it can be just as valuable for people to be aware of the cause and support it by encouraging others to attend and donate, even if they themselves are not available to attend the event. If you want to promote a certain culture of inclusion in your school community, it can be just as important to have the extended families of the students aware of what kind of environment the school is trying to cultivate and have them able to reinforce it at home. So it is important to advertise what you are doing in your school newspaper and spread the word through your social networks. Even something as simple as the sharing of a Facebook post can be considered a valuable contribution, in the long run.

The forum also discussed the challenges in encouraging seniors to participate in events. There are unique barriers that can be discouraging to a senior participating, such as: transportation/parking, length of commitment, care giving responsibilities back home, language and culture and the scheduling of meetings and events. Statistics show that although there may be fewer older volunteers contributing to a cause, those that do volunteer do so for longer hours than their younger counterparts. The health benefits of seniors donating their time to a cause or an association includes: improved physical functioning, and enhanced emotional and social well-being as it helps develop new social connections. This is a timely issue as our general population gets older. Many grandparents are helping their children by being more involved with the grandchildren, picking them up after school, etc.. Invite them to participate in Home and School. They may just be a great untapped resource you have not fully considered. Ultimately, when looking for volunteers in a Home and School Association, be prepared to look beyond the immediate parents with children in the school. Anyone who supports your activities and goals can contribute valuable time and energy and be considered an asset to achieving your goals.

To quote a tired cliché “Be prepared to think outside the box!”

Board Member Feature: Rose Murphy



My love of volunteering came from my mom who was a member of the PTA of my high school. So, I followed in her footsteps becoming president of our Ladies' Auxillary and of our mixed Bowling League.

I was married to my soul mate for 28 wonderful years before the lord called him home. I have two beautiful daughters.

I became very involved in the education field during their school days at St. Charles Elementary and Pierrefonds Comprehensive High joining the school committees and then governing board in 1998.

As a member of the parents' committees federations of the Island of Montreal and the Province of Quebec I represented the English parents of Baldwin-Cartier and Lester B. Pearson School Boards. In 1998 the Minister of Education, Pauline Marois, consulted FCPIM on the draft Bill 104. We suggested a number of changes to strengthen parents' rights and some were accepted.

As a commissioner I sat on many committees which produced most of the policies at LBPSB. I retired from Council in 2013. I figured it was time to give younger citizens the chance to do their thing.

Rosemary Murphy, BA:
Vice-President, FCPIM Board of Directors | Baldwin-Cartier and LBPSB Delegate, FCPPO | Education Act Instructor since 1995 | Parent Commissioner, LBPSB | Elected Commissioner, LBPSB | Board of Directors and Executive Committee Member, QESBA | Vice-President, QFHSA Board of Directors | Member of Liberal District Association (Pierrefonds-Dollard) Board of Directors

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June 8-12, 2017



Bill 105 according to Michael Bergman

This article was originally published in the Suburban on August 10, 2016, written by P.A. Sevigny

Following his successful fight against the Couillard administration's much-discussed Bill 86, Montreal lawyer Michael Bergman told The Suburban that except for a few details, Bill 105 is really "...not much more than a word-for-word copy of Bill 86."

While the new bill will maintain school board rights to hold their own elections, Bergman says that Bill 105 is little more than a carbon-copy of the old bill insofar as it continues to provide the education minister with all the power he (or she) needs to intervene and overturn school board decisions. **Aside from the minister's singular power over all of the province's school boards, the bill also allows the minister to effectively control school board authority by reducing their ability to control and manage their own financial resources.**

"The central fact of the matter is that this new bill will seriously reduce the ability of the school board's councillors to manage their board's affairs," said the veteran Montreal lawyer.

Based upon a close reading of the new bill, Bergman told The Suburban that **the new 'Resource Allocation Committees' will essentially control the financial resources of every school board in the province. In much the same way as previously defined in Bill 86, the 15 members of a school**



Photo by: Christophe Lochte

board's resource allocation committee will be made up of 8 school principals, the board's executive director, a special-needs manager and 5 parents. As the resource allocation committee will be responsible for all professional, physical, and financial resources, parents will always be in a minority position with very little power to affect the committee's final recommendations. As committee recommendations can only be rejected by two thirds of the affected (and elected) school board council's vote, parents will be further disenfranchised because the new law also requires two thirds of a majority council vote to overturn the committee's recommendations.

"That means that over 66% of the commissioners who make up any one of the province's school boards will have to agree to vote down their recommendation," said Bergman. **"And the government knows that it's going to be difficult to get that kind of mandate on each and every issue."**

If the government manages to push Bill 105 through the National Assembly without any trouble, Bergman believes that committee recommendations will quickly become binding directives subject to the **minister's approval once they make it past the school board's elected commissioners.**

"Bill 105 is nothing more than Bill 86 except that this new bill will permit school board elections to elect commissioners who really won't be able to do very much to affect school board decisions," said Bergman.

While he's annoyed that the government will not give up its efforts to proceed with what he considers to be a flawed and erroneous reform, Bergman is confident that the government will once again be forced to reconsider its new bill once both **parents and the province's school boards realize what the Couillard administration is willing to do in order to assert its power over all of Quebec's freely elected school boards.**



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CommECH Quebec Update

(Committee for the Enhancement of the Curriculum of History of Québec)

On June 22, 2016, members of the QFHSA Education Committee invited members of the wider education sector to come together to discuss the new curriculum for the History of Québec and Canada course for Secondary III and IV, scheduled to be taught the coming fall. Robert Green, head of the Senior Social Studies Department at Westmount High School, and an open critic of the current curriculum, was invited to serve as Chair.

Representatives from the Regional Association of West Quebecers (RAWQ), the English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA), the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN), as well as the Leading Education and Resources Network (LEARN) participated in the initial discussion. Several other organizations expressed interest but were unable to attend this first meeting due to scheduling conflicts.

This first meeting explored a variety of opinions and perspectives from around the table, regarding the course material, its perceived shortcomings and advantages, as well as a consideration of how schools might supplement the curriculum through access to outside resources.

This revised history curriculum had first been introduced as a pilot project in 2015-16 in 30 schools in Québec. When concern had been raised that the content was minimizing the historical contributions of minority, native and the English speaking communities in regards to the development of the province, there was talk the curriculum might yet be revised as Education Minister

Sébastien Proulx had not yet “signed off on it”. The Minister had announced in May that the curriculum would stay in the pilot stage, and further revisions could be considered **to better reflect Québec’s cultural diversity.** Word came out in June, however, that any revisions would be minor and that the text books were already in print.

All nine of the English school boards debated long and hard, but eventually voted to go ahead to implement the curriculum with the understanding that it did address some of their concerns and that the format, being spread out over two years rather than one, offered more opportunity for leeway in presenting additional material drawn from other sources.

LEARN reported that there had been three days of pedagogical instruction on June 20th, 21st, and 22nd, 2016. There appeared to be, indeed, lots of space and time for teachers to go off into supplementary material, but, in the end, it is important to remember that teachers need to cover what is required for the exams. One can read through any given chapter of the **curriculum and say “Yes, yes, ...but what about this?”** The perspectives are not as fair as they could be, and the information not as complete. What remains important is the ability to read it critically, be aware of what is missing, and find ways to provide resources to the teachers. But how many teachers are going to have the interest, time and energy to go that extra step, especially if it is not going to be required for the exam? The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network has an excellent magazine publication, **“The Quebec Heritage News”** which focuses on English speaking heritage in Québec. With a subscription rate of \$40, it could serve

as a valuable resource for every school library to supplement this history curriculum and bring the contributions of the English speaking community in Québec into sharper focus

Additional publications that explore the historical perspective and on-going contributions of minority communities in Québec can be found with a little initiative. One such publication, *The Nation* is an online Cree news magazine that addresses native concerns, initiatives, challenges, successes and cultural events. Our students need a curriculum that is balanced and truthful and reflects our cultural diversity. On September 14th, ComECH-Québec met again to discuss drafting a statement, widening the representation on the committee to include Francophone education sector and so have a curriculum that brings us together and builds social cohesion. Next meeting set for September 28, 2016.

How Home & Schools can support school libraries

By Sheila Desormeaux, President, PETES Home and School

Last year, due to the budget cuts, many LBPSB schools had to sadly say goodbye to their school librarians. Without any guarantee of their return, a conversation started as to whether or not libraries were relevant in an age where children can access an abundance of information and read anything they want to, at the tap of a screen. The thought was that possibly the space could be put to better use. There definitely was a debate for both sides but, thankfully, the Lester B. Pearson School Board was able to find the funds to bring back school librarians, if for only one day per week. Absolutely better than nothing, but not all students would be able to benefit in such a short period of time. This was seen as the perfect opportunity for parent volunteers to step up to the plate and shine, as they so often do.

Before any idea can take shape, the support of the administration and the librarian is key for its success. **With everyone's blessing, our volunteers were able to** organize a schedule that not only allowed for maximum library time for all classes but also time for the kindergarten students to use the library for special themed activities.

“THE BEST PART OF IT ALL IS THAT EVERY STUDENT LEAVES THE LIBRARY WITH A BOOK IN HAND AND A SMILE ON THEIR FACE.”

At the beginning of the year, our Home and School votes to allocate a small budget (around \$250-\$300) for library activities. These funds will be used to decorate the library and for various Home & School sponsored library activities throughout the academic year. The themes chosen are a collaboration between the librarian and the volunteers with each bringing their own ideas to the table. Once chosen, the volunteers work their magic to bring the library to life. Since our kindergarten no longer has an art period, the teachers are happy to create theme-related crafts for the library for all to see. The students are always curious to see what is new in the library and always eager to come back. Books are then selected and showcased according to the theme. During the day the Home & School volunteers read to the students, create different games and organize special activities in the library, making it such a happy and encouraging place to visit. The best part of it all is that every student leaves the library with a book in hand and a smile on their face.



From the Archives, Cont'd

It is hardly surprising that, three years later, there should emerge from your studies a brief to the Royal Commission on Education which was to some extent prophetic in many respects, chiefly because of the wealth of carefully documented information upon which your recommendations were based.

If you have not done so recently, I recommend that you reread the more than 170 recommendations included in your brief to the Royal Commission in 1962 and compare them with the provisions of Bill 60 and Regulations 1 to 4 of the Minister of Education. It cannot help but reinforce your confidence-either in the validity of your own opinions or in the good common sense of the government which drew up these measures-or perhaps in both.

The QFHSA established itself as a legitimate and respected voice during that time, by securing a seat on the Protestant Committee of the Superior Council on Education, and that reputation has continued through 50 years even to this day. We continue to endeavor to educate and inform parents.



Jules Verne Elementary

Wednesday, June 15th, 2016. Jules Verne Elementary had its first ever community BBQ/Music Festival event. Organized in association with the Jules Verne Home and School Association, the event gathered 600 friends and family members for food, fun and, of course, music.

Ms. Amanda, the school music teacher, spent weeks preparing the students for their performances and they were fantastic. The BBQ, which preceded the music festival, went off without a hitch, thanks in large part to the numerous volunteers and donations that the Home and School Association was able to put together. A&W Carrefour Laval (hamburgers, plates) and Piccola Gioia Catering (BBQ) were two of the main sponsors that helped make this event such a success.

City Councillor Paulo Galati as well as Dan-Michaël Abécassis, political attaché to MNA Saul Polo, were on hand to partake in the community event.

The Jules Verne community atmosphere is one that rivals the best of them. This school of less than 250 students is considered to be one of the few bilingual schools in the Laval area and, judging from the parent/teacher collaboration seen during this event, it will be one of the most in-demand schools in the coming years.



Beacon Hill Elementary

Happy Anniversary Beacon Hill!!!

50th anniversary Gala 2016 of Beacon Hill Elementary

Last April, over 200 guests attended the Beacon Hill Elementary 50th Gala organized by the Home and School. Guests included current staff, alumnae from Florida and Minneapolis, parents from as far back as the 1960's, 3 past principals, teachers from almost every decade, alumnae who now have their own children at the school, and alumnae who are now teachers! It was an evening to celebrate the community that is focused around our wonderful school, to relax with old and new friends, and to raise over \$2,400 towards special classroom projects!

50th Anniversary Picture

Last Spring, Beacon Hill Home and School organized a drone photograph of the all school in a shape of a BH and of a 50. The day was perfect and the kids were amazing and loved seeing the drone fly over their heads.

Family BBQ

Beacon Hill had a very successful year end BBQ in June. Over 80 staff members, parents, grade 6 students, and alumnae from the Class of 2013 came together as volunteers to make this fun community BBQ another BIG SUCCESS for our approximately 300 students, their families, and our extended community members. There was music, food, raffle prizes, giant board games, and a fun "Human Velcro" target activity! It was an opportunity for parents and staff to mingle in a fun and friendly environment, and for the kids to just have a great time! Over \$3600 was raised towards H&S activities for next year.



Wilder Penfield Elementary

Welcome back from a fun & adventurous summer break! The countdown is on for a new and exciting 2016-2017 school year for our new and returning families. Wilder Penfield Home and School has launched a "Join the Force" membership campaign for 2016-2017 school year, to increase our number of valuable members. The force behind our existence are the valuable men and women on our team.

Our enthusiastic force team is eager to expand on the following successes this year: Welcome Wilder Party, Monster Mash, Holiday Craft Fair, Teacher Appreciation Week, Born-to-Read Day, Bollywood Family Zumba Night, Pizza/Submarine lunches, School Spirit Wilder Wear, Comedy Night & Silent Auction, Spark Brain Bike, Parent educational workshops and Run-A-Thon.

We ended last year with class. Our volunteers provided make-up, costumes and related items for smashing classroom musical productions and our community happily congregated at Five Guys DDO for a wonderful community night / peanut fight! We ended our school year with our "Big Bang" YEAR-END CARNIVAL, celebrating with 2 pedal go-kart race tracks, Beat-the-Bucket, tug-of-war, Carnival games, potato sack races & three-legged races as well as 9-hole Mini-Golf and yummy Carnival Concession Stands (hotdogs, drinks, cotton candy and popcorn).

Also, our Executive team worked tirelessly to host a dynamic AGM where our Home and School adopted a new "2016 Wilder Penfield Home and School Constitution and Bylaws", based on the best practices and recommendations from the QFHSA. The Executive team also met in the summer to ensure the timely launch of two Fall Fundraisers: Back-to-School supply kits / labels.

It is an honour to work with the talented players on our team, who have vitality, force and energy. We are so proud to support our very special Wilder Penfield community and look forward to joining with many new members, partners and initiatives in 2016-2017; to build our community network for our students. May the Force be with you!



It is hard to believe a new school year is here. It feels like the last day of school just happened a few weeks ago! Our Home & School committee has already begun the planning of exciting events & profitable fundraisers for the upcoming year.

We concluded our 2015-2016 year, with a very successful pizza party during our school's May Open House.

Next, we assisted with the preparations for the graduation ceremony & dance for our remarkable grade sixes. Congratulations to the Class of 2016! We are all very proud of you and wish you all the best in your high school adventures!

With just days remaining in June, our home & School committee sponsored the end of the year "Tombola" organized by our fantastic team of teachers & staff. The children spent the day playing a variety of games for tickets they could later redeem for prizes & yummy treats! It was such an amusing way for the students & staff to close a very chaotic year.

Finally, we hosted our end of the year social dinner at McKibbin's in Vaudreuil. It was the perfect time to raise a glass & cheer our outgoing President Lorna Parker-Legare & our Outgoing Treasurer Pavolina Owzcar for their incredible work & dedication to Edgewater over the years. It was a nice evening to reflect with friends on another amazing year with the Edgewater Home & School.

Honoré Mercier

Our Annual Year End Fun in the Sun event was held on June 17th, 2016. A fun day filled of activities; HM Home & School provided inflatables and served freezies to all the students. Thank you to all the volunteers for helping make this a fun event.



WHERE IS MY SCHOOL?

Disappointed that your school is not in the Focus on the Locals section? Please talk to your Home and School members and submit to news@qfhsa.org the wonderful things your association is doing for our next issue in May 2016 to news@qfhsa.org

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Jabber



Jabber tells the story of a 16 year old Egyptian girl whose parents transfer her to a new school when one morning some graffiti saying "All Muslims must die" is found on the school wall. At her new school she is the only person wearing a hijab.

In Jabber, it is appearances, and judgments based on those appearances, that are challenged. All are filtered through the particular cultural laboratory of our schools where, unlike almost anywhere, people of all histories and backgrounds are thrown together, and where young people of all kinds must learn about what they believe in, and how far they are willing to go to defend those beliefs. Through its use of humor, its relevance, and its creativity, Jabber has already engaged over 40,000 teens, teachers and parents in meaningful discussions on the judgments we make based on differences.

An upcoming Geordie Production, Spring 2017