



THE VOICE OF
THE PARENT
IN EDUCATION

QFHSA NEWS

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Do You Want to Build A Snowman?

See our fabulous winter craft on [page 15](#) and enter our contest. One lucky reader will WIN 2 tickets to see Disney On Ice **"FROZEN"**

See rules ([on page 14](#)) to play and engage with us on our Facebook page.



QFHSA Fall Conference - Brain Matters

I had the opportunity to attend an excellent Fall Conference put on by the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, Inc. on Saturday, October 25, 2014 at Pearson Electrotechnology Centre in Lachine.

The Keynote address was: Brain Matters: "Optimizing the Brain for Learning" by Michael Quinn, BSc. Michael is a neuroscientist and educational consultant who is passionate about learning and exploring ways to promote engagement in both formal and informal education.

Michael shared two reference organizations: *The Dana Foundation* <http://www.dana.org/> in the USA and *The Wellcome Trust* <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/> in the UK. Both organizations focus on the study of the brain as well as publishing current research on the brain, neuroscience, and how to improve education based on that research. As well, at the right you can find some topical reading suggestions made by Michael.



It has been proven that a great way to learn is when emotions and senses are involved in the learning process. When teachers focus on positive things and encourage engagement by involving their student's emotions they are much more likely to remember something.



Michael spoke to the fact that exercise has an amazing effect on a student's ability to learn. Another method to help students learn (of any age) is to 'chunk' the information together, using elaborate encoding techniques and making it multi-sensory. The more senses implicated, the more likely one is to remember!

Learning also can be enhanced by respecting the body's natural [Circadian rhythm](#). The body has optimal times to learn wake, sleep, eliminate, etc... and at different stages of development those times can change. Teenagers, because of increased hormones for example, would do best to start their learning later on in the day, as their natural rhythm is to stay up quite late at night and wake up late in the morning. Circadian rhythms are produced by natural factors within the body, but they are also affected by signals/cues from the environment.

Optimal learning time is in 50 minute to 1 hour blocks with a 10 minute break in between. It was suggested that breaking down larger projects into smaller segments, planning breaks, getting up and moving on your break, scheduling meals and relaxing during this time or socializing is also beneficial.

Michael also told us that the 'blue light', (part of the light spectrum), can be found in sunlight, can stimulate the brain and assist in the learning process. This is ideal during the daytime. However, the 'blue light' from iPods and smart phones can over-stimulate the brain making it more difficult to sleep. There's an "app" that can be installed on your devices that can reduce blue light, ideally though, electronics should be taken out of the bedroom completely.

There was a lot of great information shared in the keynote address, and Michael has graciously shared his power point presentation with the QFHSA. To view, please follow this link: <http://bit.ly/1A9po7g>

Submitted by Victoria Brewster, MSW

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Time is Of The Essence

It has become inevitable, given the announcements prior to school board elections, that we will face a change in how decisions are to be made that will affect all citizens in Quebec.

Make no mistake: having a minister select the school board commissioners would mean that accountability for decisions would be removed from our hands. While an able minister will make good choices after an appropriate round of consultations, we have seen politicians in Quebec who have displayed overt hostility to the English speaking communities.

Another key element in present day Bill 10, and in the proposed changes to school boards, is the elimination of volunteer based elected boards to run the health care, social services and educational institutions of Quebec.

We know, as a volunteer based organization, that our strength is in the volunteers that work every day in our schools and that these volunteer hours are irreplaceable.

Again, these proposals remove a key element of accountability. The volunteers who involve themselves in community organizations and schools, provide expertise, support, financial aid and more. Eliminating this level of governance will do real harm to the vitality of our communities.

What to do? Well, the time to speak up is now. The government would like to enact these changes ASAP. Get involved. The QCGN has a petition to sign on Bill 10 on their website, it can be found at www.qcgn.ca. You can also speak to your MNA or send letters to the Ministers of Health and Education.

Connect with other parents at your school, we need to mobilize in order to try and change these laws that will adversely affect our communities. More information to come....

Larry DePoe
QFHSA President



“Eliminating this level of governance will do real harm to the vitality of our communities.”



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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.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roots Run Deep

Now that the school board elections are over and the dust has settled, let's look at the new landscape.

Councils of Commissioners have been elected, sworn in, and are sitting down to decide the future direction of their boards within the parameters of the reduced budgets and the proposed current restructuring. School Boards are still there, with Chairs and Commissioners elected to serve for at least another 4 years, but, then what? The government has redrawn the school board division maps looking for a solution to the problem of wasted resources: money that could provide needed services to the students, instead of to needless bureaucracy. Change has come, and we, as Home and Schools, have a role to play in working within that change.

If we wish to protect our school boards, we need to tell the Minister of Education, Leisure and Sport (MELS) why school boards mean so much to us, and what we feel could be lost under a new organizational structure. If this new structure is imposed, we will have to be cognizant of where problems manifest, and pass that information on to the Ministry through resolutions that get voted upon at our AGM. The QFHSA, along with our membership working "in the field", as it were, can be our eyes and our ears. Grassroots concerns evolve into resolutions, resolutions get passed by the membership, and are then passed on to the Ministry to be addressed.

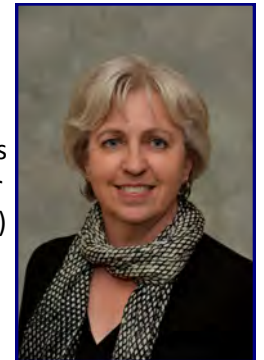
The QFHSA will be working in partnership with the Quebec English School Boards Association, (QESBA) the English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) and the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) to assure the best possible educational environment for our students and, in fact, for all students in Quebec. We cannot, however, limit our concern to proposed educational changes alone, but must pay attention to the other pieces of legislation that are also being proposed.

There are several areas that will need our attention in the coming months. Along with changes to the Act Respecting School Elections or the Quebec Education Act, (changes that will affect school boards and their governance); we must be aware of changes to health and social services (which could affect our children, our parents and even our grandparents.) A new Charter of Quebec Values, also promised to us by Premier Couillard, will undoubtedly come down in the next few months.

The Quebec that we have known stands to go through some significant changes in the next year. Home and School associations have always been involved in community life, not just school life. The home and the school paths cross over and over each other in so many different ways every day. 2015 is going to be another busy year!

Carol Meindl

QFHSA Executive Director



"Home and School associations have always been involved in community life"

Connect with us today: like QFHSA on Facebook and play our "Do You Want to Build a Snowman" contest for your chance to win 2 tickets in the Red s to see Disney on Ice "Frozen" at Spring Break. [Rules for participation are on page 14.](#)

Literacy - Family Treasures Essay Competition 2015

EVERY FAMILY possesses items that are special to them. You may have an old family bible that was brought from Europe by your great-grandmother, or may have a hubcap from your father's first car that has special meaning. You may also enjoy a special family recipe or a story at your holidays and special occasions that gets shared or retold year after year. Whatever the 'treasure', it has special meaning to someone and a story behind it. History can come alive when children identify with what they are learning. History is not just a lists of dates of wars and political instability. It is about the lives of the people who lived through those experiences.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations has long been an advocate for the promotion of literacy in children and youth that will lead to the development of life-long learners and life-long readers. Our Essay Contests have produced some wonderful essays over the years. On January 26, 2015 the QFHSA, in partnership with the Community Learning Centers, is launching the Essay Competitions. Additional information can be found here: www.qfhsa.org/#.

Are your Elementary Cycle 3 or Secondary 1 & 2 students all set to enter?
FAMILY TREASURES
 Email info@qfhsa.org or call (514) 481-5619 for details.



Membership Services Report

Greetings,

The fall flew by and December is upon us. I hope that the school year started smoothly.

SOME IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

All documentation is now due including the President's report and the Treasurer's report, the Executive list, the Local Association Renewal form and the Administration fee. Reminders will be sent by email shortly. In order to be considered "in good standing" all documents must be submitted. The first membership list and corresponding fees were due on October 31st. Names can be added as you receive them and the new list can be sent by email to the office. Additional membership fees should also be remitted in a timely manner.

Regional Councils:

- ◆ **ESSB:** On October 15th a regional council was held via video conference for Home and Schools in the Eastern Shores School Board. Two local associations were able to join in but there was a great exchange of information.
- ◆ **Fall Conference Regional Council:** Please see the article on page 9 of this edition of the QFHSA NEWS.
- ◆ **Hosting a Regional Council:** If your Home and School would like to host a regional council in the new year please contact me at marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org

Insurance Updates:

- ◆ **Inflatable Games (Bouncies):** The QFHSA insurance company has advised the office that these games are covered by insurance on a case-by-case basis. If you are planning an event where inflatable games will be rented please: a) send in a request for a certificate of additional insurance a few weeks early so the QFHSA office can send it to the insurance company, b) ask that your Home and School be included on the vendor's insurance policy and c) ensure that adequate staff or volunteers are supervising the games.
- ◆ **Hiring Vendors or Facilitators:** It is important that the Home and School have a copy of the vendor's insurance policy and a copy of their police record check, if available, since he/she will be working with children.
- ◆ **Events:** If your Home and School is holding an event outside of school hours, off premises, etc. please let the QFHSA office know and we will advise the insurance company. All events that are organized by Home and School must be approved by the principal and the governing board.

By-Laws Template: A By-laws template is in the works and an information session will be held for Home and School executives. If your Home and School has not updated its **constitution** yet, please do so in the new year. The template can be found on the QFHSA website www.qfhsa.org.

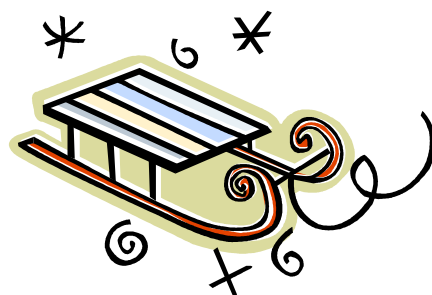
Parent Education Seminars: One of the mandates of local associations is to organize parent education seminars for the parents in your school. To cut down on costs, partner with another Home and School or school in your area. Please contact me for a list of Home and Schools in your region.

If you need additional information please feel free to contact me.

Best Regards,

Marlyn Brownrigg

Marlyn Brownrigg
QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator
marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org



Director Profile - Mr. Brian Rock

FOND MEMORIES

My first memories of Home and School go way back to when I was attending Central Park Elementary School in Lachine (Montreal), and my mother would go to Home and School Meetings in the evenings with my aunt. I remember first meeting Marion Daigle when she was my Grade Nine English Teacher at John Grant High School – she did a wonderful job with a class not so easy to instruct.

When I became a Teacher of Secondary English and History at Baie Comeau High School on the Cote-Nord, I joined the Home and School Association and eventually became the Secondary Teacher Representative on the Home and School Executive. My wife, our three daughters, and I, benefitted from the many activities organized by the Home and School Association.

As School Principal at Baie Comeau High School, I always attended Home and School meetings. I was considered part of the Home and School Executive, and as such, I was expected to play a very active role, especially in the renowned Annual Bean Supper, that raised thousands of dollars each year.

When I attended a QFHSA Fall Conference in Montreal, I met up again with Marion Daigle and became a victim of the "Daigle Inveigle" - a recruiting technique for QFHSA that has been amazingly successful

over the years. As well I became a member of the Rights Committee and later became a member of the Board of Directors. I have served as a member of the Rights Committee for some fifteen years and on the Board of Directors for over a decade.

One of the proudest moments of my over thirty-year involvement in education and community development was being the recipient of the QFHSA Leslie N. Buzzell Award, established in 1950, to recognize the Outstanding Service of a Home and School Member at the Provincial Level.

I was also proud of being named to the Advisory Board of English Education by the then Minister of Education Pauline Marois for a three-year term. Experience gained serving as a Community Correspondent for over a decade with the CBC Radio's Quebec Community Network, as President of the Baie Comeau Teachers' Association (PAPT) and the Eastern Shores Association of Administrators (AAESQ) all proved invaluable when dealing with the many complicated issues faced by a school administrator.

As School Principal of the New Richmond High School Community Learning Centre in the Gaspé, it was, once again, a pleasure to be involved with a very active Home and School Association.

Now residing in the Aylmer Sector of the Gatineau, I am presently an Educational Consultant and Researcher whose current fields of research include the Education Act and the relations between School Principals, Governing Boards, Parent Participation Organizations, Home and School Associations, Parent Committees,

Councils of Commissioners, School Boards, and the Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport.

I am still involved in community development, having been elected as a Director of the Regional Association of West Quebecers, a member organization of the Quebec Community Groups Network, and serving as Chair of the RAWQ Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Committee.

On the QFHSA front, I have returned to the Board of Directors as Vice-President, and serve as Co-Chair of the Rights, Education and Resolutions Committee, and Chair of the Rights Sub-Committee.

As the festive season approaches, I fondly remember the atmosphere of mirth and frivolity that was predominant in the QFHSA Office as this time approached for so many years – the pleasure of being associated with such dedicated, competent, and principled individuals as Donna Sauriol, Carol Ohlin, and Marion Daigle.

*Have a Wonderful
Holiday Season
Gatineau, Quebec
December, 2014
Brian Rock*



QFHSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-2015

Top row left to right: Brian Rock (Vice President), Mona Segal (Secretary), Rhonda Boucher (Director), Lawrence DePoe (President), Wanda Leah Trineer (Treasurer),

Front Row left to right: Carol Meindl (Executive Director), Joyce Shanks (Director), Rickhey Margoese (Vice President), Rosalind Hoenig (Executive Vice President).



School Board Elections, A Post Mortem

It has been reported that the Premier of Quebec is concerned over the fact that nearly half of the Chairs of French-language school boards, and a third of the Chairs of the English-language school boards were acclaimed. As for commissioners; the rate of acclamation was over 40% in both cases, and on the English side it was closer to 50%. What was not considered, however, was the possibility that the hard work and dedication of the previous commissioners and chairs was so well respected that they ran uncontested in this election. 99+% of all the Electoral Divisions had candidates in the running in them, and that's a good thing.

While voter turn-out was low across the province, it was significantly higher in the English boards and there were certainly other mitigating factors affecting turnout. Some things to consider:



SCHOOL ELECTION RESULTS

- * The timing of the election
- * The awareness and circulation of information about the election and individuals Electoral Divisions
- * The reasons for the election, and the relevancy to everyday life
- * The history, it had been more than 7 years since the last election, and many had lost touch or were new voters.
- * The advance polls and regular polling stations which were seriously understaffed, many by individuals lacking knowledge on procedures or how to troubleshoot situations.
- * And then there was the chaos of the voters list. What were people to do if they, in fact, realised in time, that they were on the wrong list. Some had less than 48 hours to act.
- * It seemed as if everything about the School Board elections had been working against it's own success.

Many have asked why the newly elected Government did not postpone the School Board Elections for another year? The short, but to the point, answer: the last School Board Elections were held in November of 2007, with the School Board Commissioners having served for seven years even though they had been elected for only a 4 year term. Clearly, the Premier and the Cabinet had absolutely no room to manoeuvre; the School Board Elections had to be held in November of 2014, and the Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec, les Commissions Scolaires, and the School Boards received the mandates to proceed with the organization of the School Board Election for Sunday, November 2, 2014.

And now we are at the point where The Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport, (MELS) is reported as having his team of staffers working on various scenarios regarding School Boards following the disappointing voter turnout rates provincially. In fact rumour has it they were working on these plans even before the 2nd of November in anticipation of a poor voter turn-out.

There were big exceptions to those results though; the Eastern Shores School Board in the Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands-Côte-Nord had three Electoral Divisions contested. In all three contests, less than 40 votes decided the winner, in 1 case, 14 votes. The voter turnout there was 38.47%! Why was there so much more interest in the Eastern Shores School Board elections? In this case, again, dedicated, involved, knowledgeable individuals, well-known in their communities, presented themselves before the electorate. When we compare

the Eastern Shores results with that of the French-language School Boards in the same geographical region, the differences are staggering. In the 8 French school boards nearby, voter turn-out ranged from 8% to barely 20% with only 5 of the 8 boards boasting a voter turnout under 15%.

In and around Montreal; the English Montreal School Board had a voter turnout of 21.2 % and the Lester B. Pearson School Board, with a turnout of 15.69 %. Not so shabby, when considering the various difficulties outlined above. Comparitively, the turnout in la Commission Scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys was less than 3% and la Commission Scolaire de Montreal came in under 5% voter turnout for their chair and commissioners.

So there are two trends: a rise (albeit small) in voter turnout in English School Boards, and a drop in turnout for the French Language boards, to less than 5% turnout overall.

So the Monday morning quarterbacks had had a field day in their La-Z-Boys mulling over what Dr.

Bolduc's staffers should consider. Soon after, Dr. Bolduc announced the intention of reducing the 60 French-language School Boards to 36, and the nine English-language School Boards to seven. Really a no-brainer on the English side: The Eastern Townships, Riverside, and New Frontier School Boards had already been meeting for some time to discuss ways of sharing resources in terms of Adult and Vocational Education. The Littoral School Board on the Lower North Shore bordering Labrador, the Cree School Board, and the Kativik School Board are left as they presently are.

Would voter turnout rates be improved if elections were on a weekday? How about twinning School elections with Municipal Elections? Electronic voting, could soon be an option since technologies improve with each passing day! Dr. Couillard, Dr. Bolduc, please proceed with caution – the democratic right to vote is sacred – Federally, Provincially, Municipally, AND for School Boards!

I would like to end this mild diatribe with a throwing of bouquets for a job well done to the members of the QFHSA Rights, Education, and Resolutions Committee for carrying out the QFHSA Action Plan of School Board Elections! For the many volunteer hours spent planning and organizing in committee meetings; the drafting, proof-reading, and distribution of the four-page [School Boards Election Special Issue of the QFHSA News](#) handed out to parents in all the schools in the nine English-language School Boards in partnership with the Quebec English School Board Association; the planning, organizing, and holding of successful Meet the Candidates' Nights across the province in co-operation with local Home and School Associations, QESBA, the Quebec Community Groups Network, and the Community Learning Centres; and getting out the vote to the Advance Polls and on Election Day! Thank you so much for a job well done to the members of the R. E. R. Committee: Mona Segal (Education Chair), Rickhey Margolese (Resolutions Chair), Joyce Shanks (Interim News Editor), Marion Daigle (Rights Resource), Carol Meindl (Executive Director), Marlyn Brownrigg, Barb Schnider, Martin Roloff, Mike Nalecz, Sharad Bhargava, Mary Skagos, and of course Larry DePoe (President) who approved and supported the mandate to get it all done!

***Yours in education,
Brian Rock, QFHSA Vice-President
R. E. R. Committee Co-Chair & Rights Committee Chair***



The National Voice of Canadian Parents

The CHSF has been involved in many programs and endorsements with regards to excellence in education and benefitting the well being of youth; most recently:

- * the Copyright Consortium to lobby for changes to the proposed copyright legislation.
- * a Partnership with Concerned Children’s Advertisers in the Long Live Kids program - a program that provides children with tools for healthy eating, active living and improved media literacy.
- * the Importance of Banning Energy Drinks to children and youth under a certain age.
- * involvement with Health Canada to develop substance abuse issues resources
- * the Canadian Joint Statement on Physical Punishment for Children and Youth.
- * Breakfast for Learning
- * WITS program, (Walk Away, Ignore, Talk it Out, Seek Help) a program to help children deal with bullying and peer victimization.
- * Music Makes Us, a coalition for music education.
- * Prime Minister’s Awards for Teaching Excellence and Excellence in Early Childhood Education as a selection committee member

Proud moment in January for the CHSF; Receiving notice that His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston accepted the invitation to become Patron of the Canadian Home and School Federation.

With only 2 face to face meetings per year, the CHSF makes the most of their time together. Their recent Ottawa mid-term meeting, November 15 - 17, included business as well as an MP Reception. Business included;

- * Updating of the communication plan to parents
- * Discussing, the QFHSA resolution on Financial Literacy and making it applicable on a national level so that it may be passed at the CHSF AGM in the Fall.

A highlight of the time in our Nation’s Capital: an MP Reception.



CHSF Board - back; left to right - Susan Wilson - Director from BC; Deb Giesbrecht - 1st VP; Sandra Binns - Director from ON; Cynthia Richards - President; Diane Power - Director from NS; Janet Walsh - Past President. Front row - Rickhey Margolese - Director from QC; Michelle Ercolini - Secretary/Treasurer. (Missing - Charla (Cambee) Dorrington - 2nd VP and Glyn Morgon - Director from NB)



QFHSA Fall Conference - Brain Matters

The November 2nd Fall Conference was chock full with informative workshops, panel discussions, displays, a keynote speaker and regional council meetings. For those who attended, there was huge value in the day. So much so, that many wanted to attend more than one of the in-demand workshops. Brain function, and concerns about the brain, such as ADD, ADHD and psychological issues such as depression, are at the forefront of people’s minds. For that reason two of our workshops were completely filled. Our Keynote speaker, Michael Quinn, was incredibly well received, and we are looking at bringing Michael back as he has so much more relevant information and tools to share with our membership.

Our panel discussion on School Board Elections brought up many of the issues that Brian Rock addresses in his School Board Election post mortem on the opposite page.

We received greetings from our prestigious guests and long-time friends of the QFHSA; MNA Geoffrey Kelley from the



Jacques-Cartier riding also attended as a guest. (See the next 2 pages for more information about the Fall Conference, and let us know what topics interest you for future events.)

Fall Conference 2014 Raffle Winners

- QFHSA – Door Prize (Cookbook) winner**
Leah Smith, Chelsea Elementary School
- eCause Canada - Green Goodie Gift Bag**
Cathenna Michaud, Maplegrove Elementary School
- Prestige Fundraising - Nancy Carbone, Hillcrest Academy**
- Maximage - Tina Orsini, Hillcrest Academy**
- Renée Deschamps, Les Petits Bouts-de-Choux de L’Est
- Giovanni Goffredo, Nesbitt Elementary



QFHSA President, Lawrence DePoe, opened our Fall Conference and introduced our esteemed guests who brought greetings from their own organizations. Lise Langlois of MELS (Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport) encouraged us to keep our focus and wished us much success. Kate Le Maistre, Chair from the Advisory Board on English Education, reminded us that we live in a society where “one size does not fit all”, and told us to advise the ministry of the changing needs of our community.

David D’Aoust of QESBA (Quebec English Language School Boards Association), addressed the attendees as well, and thanked the QFHSA for taking the lead on the Special Bulletin on School Board Elections and said he was looking forward to the panel in which he was to participate later on in the day.

Past Editorial Page Editor of the Montreal Gazette and newly appointed Quebec Representative for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, David Johnston, praised us for our valuable commitment and continued parental involvement in education.

Our own Carol Meindl, Executive Director of the QFHSA, went over the information kit and inclusions before the floor was turned over to our Keynote presenter Mr. Michael Quinn. His presentation was very well received, and many attendees stayed behind to speak with Michael one on one.

Perhaps the best way to tell you about the morning workshops is to share what attendees themselves had to say:

“ I have attended several workshops by Deb & Mona of DM Family Services in past years, and they are always very engaging. They connect with people through personal experiences, and real stories. This was an excellent presentation on a hot topic, ADHD in children, providing up-to-date facts and some of the latest research in the field. Deb & Mona outlined the ages and stages children go through and the associated behaviors and challenges of each. They provided tools and steps for parents seeking help and interventions for their children, including organizational skills training, diet changes, therapy/counselling, medication, and mindfulness, to name a few. Overall, I found DM’s workshop to be very dynamic, informative and I left with tools and strategies to share with other parents and friends. Looking forward to the next one!”

Anita Fudalewski, VP Home & School, Birchwood Elementary, St-Lazare

“Depression in elementary and high school students was the focus of Feeling Sad, Feeling Blue: Depression in Children and Adolescents; Facilitated by Dr. Zmira King. This well-attended workshop opened by providing parents with a basic understanding of depression versus sadness or moodiness and followed-up with an excellent short video. It explained that sadness is a normal emotion; depression is a mental illness where early intervention is critical and more effective when mild to moderate symptoms emerge, often during adolescence.

Parents were interested to learn about some of the causes of depression. We were also informed about the classic physical, cognitive and social-emotional-behavioral signs of depression in children and teens. Dr. King emphasized that there are ways to help prevent depression and protective factors do exist.

Dr. King concluded with the encouraging news that there are effective treatments for depression. She provided a list of resources for further information and strategies to promote better mental health all of which are available on the Lester B. Pearson School Board website under the tab marked CEMH. We are grateful to Dr. King for sharing her important message with the workshop participants: “Good mental health leads to better learning in school.”

Submitted by Cheryl Boucher, Workshop Participant, John Rennie High School

Our special afternoon panel discussion on the School Board Elections, moderated by our own Brian Rock with esteemed guests, Frank Verillo - Retired Commissioner, Kim Hamilton QESBA, Walter Duszara - QCGN Secretary, and QFHSA President, Larry DePoe, sparked some interesting conversation, items which will most certainly be a part of our future conversations going forward with the proposed restructuring of the school boards.

Just before regional councils, Brian Rock spent some time discussing the differences between the various bodies in our education circles such as PPOs, Governing Boards, local Home and School Associations and Principals. He made suggestions on how to improve and solidify the relationship between them to benefit all parties involved. All in all, it truly was an information packed day!



2014 Fall Conference Regional Council Sessions

Topics that are Important to You!

This year, three (3) regional councils took place at the Fall Conference; two (2) for parents from elementary schools and one (1) for those from high school. If there are issues that you would like to have discussed, please contact the QFHSA and we can help you organize and host a regional council for the schools in our region.

The following items were discussed in the Fall Conference regional councils:

- ◆ **Getting Parents to Workshops and to the Fall Conference:** Suggestions: consider having Home and Schools host a workshop in the evening in conjunction with the QFHSA and invite other Home and Schools to attend; hold the Fall Conference on two-half days since some parents often cannot commit to a full day; increase communication to members.
- ◆ **Essay Contests:** The QFHSA would like to increase the participation in the essay contests. Ask teachers if they are interested now before they plan their curriculum for the new year.
- ◆ **Insurance:** See Membership column on [page 4](#).
- ◆ **School Board Elections:** Attendees expressed their frustration about the lack of general information, voters lists, the role of commissioners, etc.
- ◆ **By-Laws template:** The QFHSA is working on a By-laws template and will hold a general information session for Home and School executives in the new year.
- ◆ **Audits/Reviews:** How often the Home and School should have an audit/review of their finances depends on the amount of money that the local association manages with 3 years being the minimum interval of time and 5 years being the maximum.
- ◆ **Maintenance:** Basic building and grounds maintenance is a big concern at some schools. The QFHSA will look at the resolutions it has on this issue.
- ◆ **Police Record Checks:** Some school boards have instituted volunteer screening and some have not. More information is needed on this topic.
- ◆ **Recruiting Members and Volunteers:** How to increase membership and how to get members to attend meetings.
- ◆ **How can Home & Schools Associations fit into the High School environment?**
- ◆ Participants were invited to join the QFHSA Rights and Education committee (even on a temporary basis) especially if an issue piques their interest.



PHOTO LEGEND - Page 8

1. Lawrence DePoe - QFHSA President
2. David Johnston - Quebec Representative for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages
3. Kate Le Maistre - Chair, Advisory Board on English Education
4. Lise Langlois - MELS, Directrice des services à la communauté anglophone
5. David D'Aoust - QESBA President
6. Deb Kellman, Mona Segal - DM Family Services
7. Larry DePoe (QFHSA), Michael Quinn (Keynote) Carol Meindl (ED QFHSA)
8. Walter Duszara - QCGN, Kim Hamilton - QESBA, Frank Verillo - Retired Commissioner EMSB, Lawrence DePoe - QFHSA

All Fall Conference Photos can be found on the [QFHSA Website](http://qfhsa.org/photo_gallery.htm) or
At http://qfhsa.org/photo_gallery.htm

Who Made It to Conference...

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Allion Elementary | Les Petits Bouts-de-Choux de L'Est |
| Arundel Elementary | Lindsay Place High School |
| Beacon Hill | Lord Aylmer Elementary |
| Beaconsfield High | Macdonald High |
| Beurling Academy | Maplegrove Elementary |
| Birchwood Elementary | Nesbitt Elementary |
| Chelsea Elementary | Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary |
| Dunrae Gardens Elementary | Roslyn Elementary |
| Edgewater Elementary | Royal Vale Elementary |
| Edinburgh Elementary | South Hull Elementary |
| Elizabeth Ballantyne Elementary | St. Thomas High |
| Hillcrest Academy | St. Vincent's Elementary |
| John Rennie High School | Westpark Elementary |

Best Wishes to the QFHSA on your 70th Anniversary!



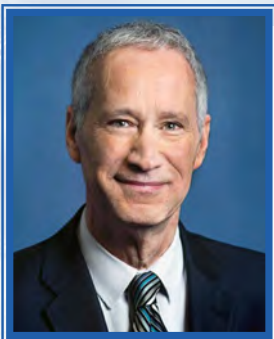
FRANÇOIS OUIMET

MNA for Marquette
First Vice-President of the National Assembly
514 634-9720



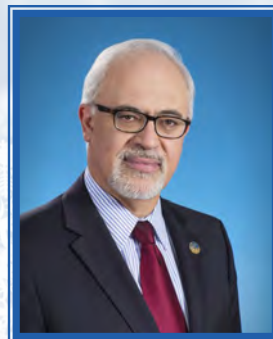
GEOFFREY KELLEY

MNA for Jacques-Cartier
Minister Responsible for Native Affairs
514 697-7663



DAVID BIRNBAUM

MNA for D'Arcy-McGee
Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier
514 488-7028



CARLOS LEITÃO

MNA for Robert Baldwin
Finance Minister
514 684-9000





DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

DEAR DM,

I have 2 wonderful boys, both great kids, and both very different. My 10 year old son is great at lots of things: he's bubbly, outgoing, has lots of energy and lots of friends. He's good at lots of different things - but not at getting ready or getting organized. Whenever we need to go somewhere - school, hockey, the store - he seems to arrive without the things he needs, especially homework, books, or lunch.

Getting through homework is an especially difficult experience for all of us! We start the homework process on Saturday, but it seems there is never a Sunday night when he doesn't remember that he needs to prepare for a project, study for a test, or get something from Bureau En Gros... It also creates arguments at home. I worry that his struggles to stay organized will have long term impacts on his life, and that he will have trouble at school and fall behind... and also that all the arguments will negatively affect our relationship. How can I help him be more organized, and more successful at homework and at school?

DEAR WANTING MY SON TO DO BETTER AT HOMEWORK

For some young people, getting and staying organized, finding materials, coming prepared to class, and meeting deadlines in a timely manner comes naturally and easily. For others, this can be very challenging. Your child is not alone. Keeping ourselves focused and "on track" - despite the many distractions and demands of life - is a challenge for many of us, and he may need to learn some skills and strategies to help him master these challenges.

Some youth struggle with "attentional difficulties", and may face even more challenges. These youth are often distracted, unfocused, and may also be restless and impulsive. They may find it even more taxing to begin projects, keep track of papers, belongings, deadlines or tests, and complete homework, or chores. Even when they are able to get themselves to begin a project or activity, they may find it difficult to persist - especially if the task is uninteresting, tedious, or demanding. This can result in failure to complete tasks at home and/or at school, or in other areas of life.

In addition, for some young people, this can also cause lowered self-confidence / self-esteem, as well as possible diminished school engagement.

It turns out that the root to parenting youth with attentional difficulties lies in having a better understanding of how the brain works. It is now widely accepted that the human brain is not completed its development until we reach the age of 25 - 30 years. Research indicates that for people with attentional difficulty, this can be delayed by up to 30%. Specifically, people with attentional difficulties have more difficulties with executive functions: The part of the brain in charge of planning, concentrating, and staying on task is not as active as it should be compared to others the same age. As such, when youth with attentional difficulties have to get themselves to do something that is not "delicious" to them, it takes **that much more work** for them to focus, plan, stay organized, and persist until the task is accomplish. This has nothing to do with will power, inadequate parenting, laziness, or lack of intelligence. In fact, many people with high intelligence (and even "talented and gifted" categories) can still find themselves having trouble with focus, attention, impulsivity, and organization.

The good news is... there are ways to help youth with these challenges. Organizational Skills Training (OST) is a skills-building approach that helps young people deal with these difficulties. This system uses specific brain-based teaching strategies to engage students, and, according to research, has been shown to: Improve academic productivity and performance, as well as decrease problems associated with doing homework. Organizational Skills Training (OST) is an evidence-based skills-building approach that helps young people get and stay organized, and to be more successful at home, at school, and in life. Contact DM for more information!

Sincerely,

DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

CONTACT DM !

514.483.9339

www.dmfamilyschool.com



**DM'S ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING GROUPS
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!**



"We will continue building, but we will never forget!"

25 years after the tragedy, Polytechnique Montréal launches the Order of the White Rose and the Week of the White Rose. These two initiatives are being launched to transform the memory of this dark day, the day when the lives of 14 young women were cut short in the classrooms and halls of Polytechnique.

"We will continue building, but we will never forget," is the inspiring message from engineer Nathalie Provost, who was wounded on December 6, 1989, that tragic day.

Even though 25 years have passed, the event will never fade away for the victims' families, or for those who were wounded or witness to the tragedy.



Each anniversary has brought its share of sadness. Over time, it has also brought its share of hope. Driven by a duty of remembrance, the Polytechnique community is ready now to transform the memory of this dark page in its history into a new chapter. To mark the 25th anniversary of the tragedy of December 6, 1989, Polytechnique is launching two initiatives that it wants to become permanent.

The Order of the White Rose is a \$30,000 Canada-wide scholarship created to honour the lives of the engineering students lost on December 6, 1989. Additional information can be found: <http://www.polymtl.ca/ordroseblanche/en/>

The Week of the White Rose is a fundraising initiative with the theme "The Future Blooms in Our Hands" in order to send girls from less affluent communities to Polytechnique Science Camp, "Folie Technique". For details or to purchase a virtual rose in support of this initiative please visit: <http://whiteroseweek.org/>

The white rose has, over the years, become the symbol of Polytechnique's commemorative activities. On December 6, 2014, this symbol of peace became the image for future annual events. The shooting at the Montreal Polytechnique was a tragedy most can still remember. Now there is an opportunity to create something positive out of that tragedy.

November 21, 2014



**Thomas
Mulcair**
NDP + NPD

HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
OTTAWA, ONTARIO | K1A 0A6

thomas.mulcair@parl.gc.ca

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Canada's New Democrats, I extend sincere congratulations to the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) on 70 years of serving students and families in the province.

Nelson Mandela said that education is the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world. QFHSA staff and volunteers truly recognize the value of including parents, students, educators and the wider community in decisions around schooling. Since 1944, you have focused on enriching the learning experience as a means of building a stronger province and a stronger Canada. I commend you for undertaking this important work.

Congratulations once again on reaching this significant milestone of serving more than three generations of Canadians. I wish you continued success in all your future endeavours.

Warmest regards,

Thomas Mulcair
Leader of the Official Opposition \\\ Chef de l'Opposition officielle



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since 2002!

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(Primary and Junior programs)
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Député/MP
Westmount - Ville - Marie

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DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN?

PLAY FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN...

2 Tickets in the Reds to see:

Disney On Ice "FROZEN"

How to play:

- * Count all the snowmen in the newsletter
- * Like QFHSA on Facebook
- * Enter your answer in the contest (at the top)
- * Interact with us ie: like, comment, share posts
- * Your name will be added to the draw 1 time for every interaction with QFHSA until the date of the drawing.
- * We will draw for the winner approximately 1 week before the show.
- * Stay connected with us, help to grow our readership as we continue to share with you information to benefit children and youth in education.



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Do You Want to Build A Snowman?

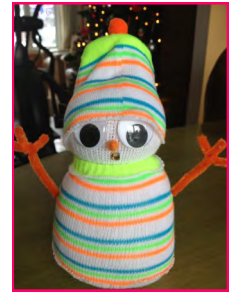
Stuff You Need



How to Build The Snowman



Turn your cut tube sock inside out to place the elastic. Then turn it right side out to fill. Now your Snowman will sit easily on a flat surface.



Get Creative!



St. Thomas High School Lecture Series

All proceeds go to the St-Thomas teacher's wish list.

The lecture series was designed for you, the parents, to offer you insight and tools to help you deal with your teenager. The objective is to help open lines of communication and close the gap!

Tickets \$10 and sold in advance, space is limited 19:30 to 21:00

To reserve tickets send an e-mail to sthomashands@gmail.com

January 13, 2015 - Teens and Drugs.

Monica Bourgeois, MSW. Specialized training in alcohol and drug addiction. Experience working as a youth drug counsellor. The lecture will cover:

- how to talk to your kids about drugs.
- role parents can play in preventing drug use.
- current trends.
- why teens use drugs?
- what to do if you suspect your teen is using.
- where to go for help.

March 17, 2015 - Discipline for Older Kids & Communicating with your Teens

Dr. Gardner is a practicing psychologist. He has taught educational psychology and has served on the board of the Order of Quebec Psychologists.

The talk will emphasize the importance of a firm, caring structure for raising children of all ages. Communication will be demonstrated to be much more than just speaking and listening, entailing also behavior. Dr. Gardner will seek to enlighten parents on the various aspects of communication.

Hosted by CJAD's Dr. Laurie Betito



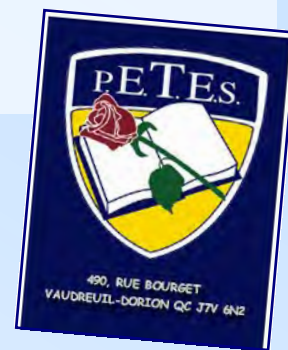
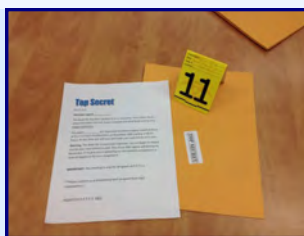
Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary

The Home & School kicked off the year with its annual corn roast. There was a DJ, games for the kids and corn for all. It was a great way to reconnect with the school community after the summer.

Our first fundraiser of the year was with Ed-Rec Citrus selling oranges and grapefruits. A portion of the money raised will be put towards 21st century learning at PETES. Our first-ever family movie night was a great success with pizza dinner, and more than 120 in attendance watching Mr. Peabody and Sherman. We are looking forward to our next one; a pyjama party and The Polar Express.

The Scholastic Book Fair this year ran from Nov 25-27th in the school gymnasium. The committee chose a theme of Secret Agents, decorating a wall in the staffroom with tips and games for the teachers and their students, and the committee even left each teacher a "top secret" envelope with instructions on how to decorate in the run-up to the fair. The aim was to encourage the love of reading!

PETES families love the monthly pizza/TCBY and sub lunch days. We are also looking forward to our annual holiday pajama breakfast for all staff and students. PETES Home and School has the best volunteers without whom none of these great activities would be possible!



Onslow Elementary



Our Home and School Committee just finished our first fundraiser of the year. We held our 6th Annual Christmas Craft Show. Vendors paid \$25 for a table and they came to showcase their talents and crafts. We had art, photography, knitted goods, local honey, kids crochet hats, jewellery,

Christmas crafts, baking, Scentsy, Epicure etc... Our parents and students also had a bake sale table and this year, we broke our record by raising nearly \$700. Our canteen served homemade chili, soup and buns as well as coffee and tea. The grand total for funds raised was about \$1,850.

One of the favourite activities at the craft show was the visit from Santa. One of our workshop rooms was set up so that all the kids could write their letters to Santa and personally deliver them.

Our annual Regal Fundraiser runs from October to December. We typically raise around \$400.

In December we will also be holding our 2nd Annual Christmas dinner. We, the Home and School Committee, will donate all the food as well as our time and have the students and staff all join together in the gym to enjoy a home cooked turkey dinner. It was such a hit in our inaugural year last year that we want to continue the tradition. This is great for everyone as we do not have a lunch program other than Pizza on Fridays.

Stacy Johnston
President, Home and School Committee



Lord Aylmer



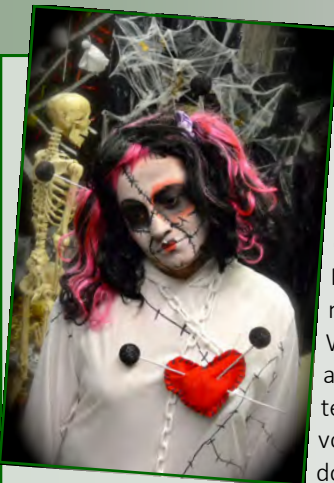
Lord Aylmer Home and School hosted their Beginning of School Year BBQ on Thursday September 4, 2014.

Home and School members, school staff, students and their families enjoyed a BBQ hosted by M&Ms. School staff volunteered for this event and were instrumental in making it a success.

Activities included were Bouncy Castles and a Rock Climbing wall. The students had a blast!



Honoré Mercier



fortune teller, a scary butcher, and even a creepy bathroom. Our volunteers had elaborate costumes and

At Honoré Mercier, we do Halloween BIG and spooky! Thanks to some creative volunteers, the library was transformed into our best haunted house ever. Our theme this year was Voodoo Nightmare. We had a cemetery, voodoo dolls, a



face paint. They were ready to scare the 6th graders but also gave high fives and big smiles to all the Kindergarteners. Our haunted house is a great tradition for Halloween. It is enjoyed by all

teachers and kids. Kudos to our volunteers who spent all day on October 30th to set up the haunted house. All your hard work was worth it!



St. Charles - Achieving Together



When Mr. Canavan (St. Charles School principal) asked Home & School for support in helping to raise funds towards breast cancer research, the Home & School volunteers did not hesitate to help. Mr. Canavan took part in a Lester B Pearson School Board initiative target to raise \$50,000. If the goal was met, those who volunteered (including Mr. Canavan) agreed to "shave and save" by October 30th.

Home & School quickly got together and hosted a family fun movie night which also included the sale of home baked treats donated by a parent volunteer. The movie night was one of our most successful ones with about 300 people in attendance and the baked goods were a huge success too!!!

In an effort to raise more awareness, the grade 5 French teacher, M. Yves, set a challenge that if more than \$2,000 was raised, he would also volunteer to shave his head.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this and to all those who supported the movie night, as we raised a total of \$2,200. WOW!!! What an accomplishment for our community and for that we thank you!!!!

It's amazing what a community can do when we all work together for the common good.

St. Charles Home & School believes that *"Together We Can Achieve!"*



Eardley Elementary

Our 1st Annual Harvest Dinner was a very successful event. We had over 150 guests. All decorations including centerpieces were handmade by the Home and School team. The team also made all the lasagnas, salads and buns as well as apple crumble for dessert.

When planning this event our goal was to bring the families of Eardley into the heart of our school and celebrate the Fall Harvest together as a community. Our Home and School is a strong believer that if children and families have a strong sense of attachment to their school - the school will become a wonderful happy place which will foster many great friendships. Our next event is scheduled for November 29th from 10 to noon. We will be hosting a pancake breakfast with Santa and other fun activities which will be open to the community at large.



Other Exciting News From Eardley.... Taking it Outside

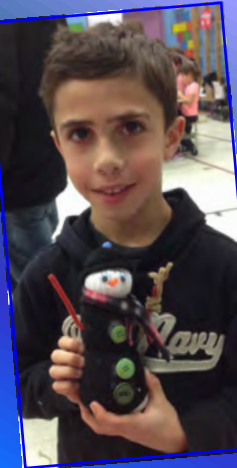
The Eardley Elementary School is looking to bring students outside to learn. The Home and School Association recently submitted a grant application to fund an outdoor education centre project.

"We have a very active Home and School association that is instrumental in helping the school meet a target of building more outdoor education opportunities," explained Ralph Mason, Eardley Elementary School Principal. "We will pursue funding through fundraising and a grant formula that will see the provincial government share the costs if our application is successful."

The fundamental thought behind the project is to bring the rural to the urban school located in the heart of Aylmer. Stay tuned to the QFHSA news for more updates on this exciting project!

Wilder Penfield Elementary

Many thanks for all of the hard work and efforts put in by all who helped at the Wilder Penfield Holiday Fair. From bakers to craft station volunteers to people helping to clean up, you all donated your precious time for a great event and your efforts were all equally appreciated. The children seemed to really love the crafts, and positive feedback was heard from parents. The school is very fortunate to have such wonderful parents who give their time and efforts for great community events. We should all be very proud in producing such a wonderful holiday fair. Gearing up for the Holidays, Wilder Penfield is now preparing for its annual food drive to help make the holidays special for families in need.



Buckingham Getting Crafty

The Buckingham Elementary Home & School Association was proud to host a Christmas Craft Sale on November 8th. In association with one of our members, Suzanne Laurin, who is herself a crafter, we were able to rent out 23 tables to local crafters, with all the profits of the rental going back into our school.

We were also able to showcase our Buckingham Elementary School student crafters. Our students had their own table of decorations to sell, thanks to many hours of hard work during lunch, and Bonnie Camus, one of our teachers, who has been organizing the "Student Craft Club".

During the day of the sale, visitors were asked to fill out a ballot to win door prizes to thank them for attending. These door prizes were generously donated by a few of our H&S members and also from our local crafters.

We also held a raffle, with tickets having been on sale since September. We were lucky enough to have generous

donations towards the raffle; a pair of hockey tickets to see the Ottawa Senators play the Carolina Hurricanes in January 2015, 2 tickets to the National Art Centre in Ottawa, and many more. The lucky winner of the hockey tickets was one of our very own parents from the school.

This event took a lot of hard work and coordination on the part of our members and without the support of our donors, parents, school and community would not have been the success that it was.



Cedarcrest Elementary

The Cedarcrest Home & School Association is off to a great start this year with two new fundraisers. We are eager to see the final results of our used toy drive. Cedarcrest families have been donating used toys that are being sold through a local friperie, La Boîte aux Trésor. Loads of amazing toys have already been collected. This fundraiser has already had unbelievable success in a short time!

Cedarcrest School has now taken on the task of organizing a raffle. We took the opportunity of the upcoming parent-teacher conferences to sell raffle tickets. The devoted members of our Home and School Association together with the staff school came together and approached numerous companies from our community to ask for donations. The result was overwhelming and extremely generous with prizes ranging from gift cards, to season hockey tickets!

This year we truly have turned to our community to help sponsor our events involving food and beverages. Large store chains such as Maxi and Wal-Mart have donated goodies!



Working together, using each other's strengths and collaborating with the various stakeholders within our community has helped kick-start an incredible year!

We are looking forward to making this the best fundraising year yet at Cedarcrest, so we can continue offering the best to our children!

Regards,
Claudette Couture , VP Cedarcrest H&S

Sitting down: Stephen Walker Standing from left to right: Anne-Marie St.-Pierre, Enza Petrella (president H&S), Claudette Couture (vice-president H&S), Mrs. Nadia Sammarco (principal), Alessandra Governale

Edgewater is Turning 50

We are celebrating our 50th anniversary at Edgewater Elementary School this year, and the excitement has only just begun!

We started the year with much exhilaration. Congratulations to *Mila Martin* one of our first grade students who was chosen by CTV news to wear a "Go Pro" camera to document her first day of school from the perspective of a six-year old. She represented our school and all first graders with grace & refinement.

With the hysteria for the ALS Bucket Challenge this fall, Edgewater had to get involved! Our valued principal *Mrs. Rivard* accepted her nomination, (despite her fear of freezing cold water being dumped on her head), she took the challenge in front of the entire school, encouraging all students to bring in a donation to support the cause.

Our 4th grade students will be taking part in an "Ipad Project" this year and our Home & School voted to purchase as many Ipad minis & accessories to help support this project. Much gratitude goes to our remarkable Home & School Treasurer *Pavolina Owczar* and to *Mrs. Daphne Amster* who helped to make it all happen.

As always, October is an extremely busy time of year, we ran our annual fundraiser and celebrated Halloween with our Halloween Hulabaloo Dance. We had a record-breaking attendance this year! Costumes were outstanding and our baked goodies table was overflowing with deliciously spooky treats. Students wore their costumes on Halloween for a parade through the gym & a "Thriller" dance-off! It was declared the "Best Halloween Ever!" by many of the students.

We would like to invite all to check out on our newly created Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EdgewaterElementary> & our redesigned Web page for Edgewater at: <http://edgewater.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

By Jennifer Whiting – Edgewater Home & School Public Relations



Chelsea Spooky H&S FUN Raiser

The poster read, "This is one time of year when we get moms and dads and kids... to dress up, boogie down and roar with laughter in our fun costumes!" With more than 300 in attendance on October 23 at the Chelsea Elementary Home & School Association's Halloween dance, we did just that!

We enjoyed the opportunity of getting to know each other and our local families, all while volunteering and having fun! Admission and ticket sales for glow sticks, hot dogs, muffins, popcorn,



Patti, Fiona, Meghaan, Tricia, Leah, Nicki, Lolita, Maggie, (Missing Amber & Jacinthe)

chips, candy and pink lemonade allowed us to raise hundreds of dollars for our teachers for the purchase of much needed books and supplies, in an effort to meet the shortfall of budget cuts.

The event also allowed for some great cooperation between H&S and our After 4 day care program. Children made decorations and the kids even kicked off the marketing of the event with some hand painted posters! So thoughtful, helpful and creative!

We would also like to give a 'shout out' to a few graduated students who volunteered with set up, activities and clean up!

It was a great social event where Chelsea families and friends kicked off Halloween by dressing up and enjoying each others' company in a fun and safe family setting!

So many kids and adults alike reported having an awesome time; laughter and squeals of delight filled the Grand Hall, and the DJ's music and disco lights kept families dancing and our MPR jumping!

Thanks to our great 2014-2015 H&S team!

Patti Butler, Chelsea H&S member and Parent Committee rep.

Greendale Elementary

From the day our doors re-opened in September - it's been a whirlwind of activity at Greendale. We started with our annual corn roast on a beautiful September evening. Food, friends and fun were on the menu complete with our favorite DJ and break dancers from Break City dance school.

October, we kept busy with School Board elections and Halloween. Our Home and School hosted a Meet-the-Candidate evening for those running. It was informative, and a unique opportunity to get involved in the elections process.

Our popular Halloween dance delighted the children and this holiday season we are trying our hand at hosting a Holiday Craft Fair. We'll have artisans, vendors, Scholastic materials, and crafts for the kids as well as a visit with Santa and live holiday tunes to set the tone for the season.

Our Home & School will also be serving up our annual holiday pancake breakfast to all of the students in December; it is another highly anticipated event at our school.

It may be busy at times but it is also the most exciting part

of the year for our organization. Activities tend to slow down for a short time after the holidays, the brief lull allows us to regroup and focus on fundraising and extra-curricular activities.

Greendale sets such a wonderful example of community spirit. The cooperation and understanding between administrators, teachers, maintenance staff and parents is vital to our ability to provide the children with these exciting opportunities. Open communication is essential to everything we do at the school. It is not only a wonderful place for our children to learn and grow but a welcoming environment for parents to be involved in their child's school. We are looking forward to some fun holiday activities and a new year filled with possibilities.



South Hull Elementary

Our Monster Ball on October 23rd was an enormous success. All grades participated with DJ Eric from Rouge FM 94.9. The costume parade was a highlight of the night. Food donations were brought as entry fees, and were delivered to the Aylmer Food Centre along with a monetary donation. The money collected from admission and refreshments will be put towards purchasing new sports balls for recess.

October 9th South Hull Elementary held its second annual Spaghetti Dinner, which was a joint event coordinated by the Home and School Committee, the Governing Board and school staff. It was a wonderful night of conversation and community, bringing everyone together to kick off the fall. The Governing Board cooked meat and vegetarian options, the teachers served the food, and members of the Home and School Committee worked at the door and sold refreshments. Money raised from this event was put towards purchasing djembe

drums for Mrs. Hamilton's drumming workshops and lunchtime classes.



Genesis Has Spirit!

We are impressed with our brand new Holiday and Event Decorating Committee promoting school spirit. Their goal is to beautify the entrance and staircases of the building to encourage school pride.

We have already had several months of creative, meaningful and bilingual themes. September was decorated for Autumn, with a Fall into Learning theme. We also hung lanterns of hope signed by students for the Light the Night walk

supporting The Society of Leukemia and Lymphoma. Late October was frightful and spooky and for Thanksgiving, we showed our appreciation by writing messages on the walls expressing gratitude



for our teachers and families. Let's not forget Remembrance Day in November; we decorated with poppies and a tribute to our soldiers as well as a student-crafted display on cooperation/teamwork.

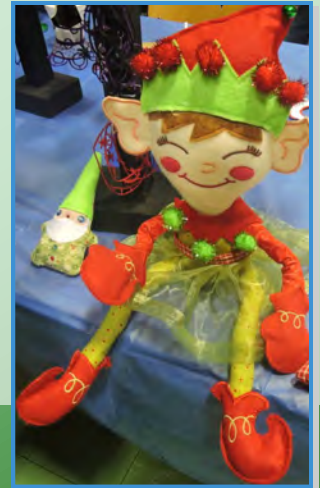
We are all looking forward to December for the holidays, and to see what our dedicated committee has planned for our very much appreciated efforts. They are making our school shine!

Grenville Elementary School



Our Craft Fair is a wonderful community event that takes place in the fall. There are many artisans and bakers that set up tables. We had a diverse line up of homemade and handmade items including blown glass ornaments, hand-stitched quilting, knitting, crocheting, candle making, jewellery, wooden carvings, Christmas trees, pickles and preserves, bread, pies..... and the list goes on. There are many talented people in the area:) Vera Young our Craft Fair organizer did a wonderful job with this event along with the GES Home & School Committee.

The \$1500.00 raised from the fair will be used toward field trips, activities and school equipment for the students of Grenville Elementary. One of our goals this year is to purchase a class set of cross country skis which will be used as part of the physical education classes as well as the ski loppet in which students participate in annually.



Merton Elementary

Hard to believe, but it's already December!! We had a great start to the school year at Merton. We've had field trips and fundraisers and of course, we can't forget about Mr. Molo's Famous Haunted House., a must see and a fun-filled experience! We have to confess we were all at teeny bit scared, but Halloween was a great event!

None of our activities or fundraisers would be possible without our dedicated parent volunteers. On behalf of the Merton Home and School, a BIG THANK YOU !



We are looking forward to more events, such as our Annual Scholastic Fall Book Fair. One of our goals is to raise enough money to help purchase a class set of iPads for the school. All support is greatly welcomed! Once again thank you and wishing everyone a great holiday!!

Merton Home and School Executive



