

The Western Québec School Board is committed to developing lifelong learners who actively contribute to society and are well prepared for the future.

### A Message from George



Dear staff, students, parents, and school commissioners, I am very happy to welcome you back to a new school year! Already the end of September and our schools and centres are buzzing with numerous activities and initiatives designed to engage and inspire our students.

General Assemblies, Terry Fox Runs, Opening Day barbecues, coupled with the beginnings of new clubs, teams, in-school activities in the Arts, not to mention renewed beginnings for students, many of whom are brand new to our board.

Speaking of which, I extend a special welcome to all of our new support staff, professionals, teachers, and cadres...some of you have joined us from other school boards, centres des services scolaires, or districts, while others are in the process of beginning their respective careers!

Either way, we welcome you to the Western Québec School Board and hope that your experience exceeds expectations!

On behalf of the senior directors' team, I wish all of you the very best: a year filled with intrigue, innovation, and learning. We look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you in your respective schools.

Sincerely, 



Photo by Fatima Sow

**South Hull  
Terry Fox Run**  
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Photo by Laura D'Alessandro

Laura D'Alessandro

### St. Michael's High School and Queen Elizabeth Elementary School Collaborate for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

#### Feature Article

The Western Québec School Board acknowledges that the lands upon which we live, learn, play, and work are on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin/Anishinaabe people.

We thank the Algonquin people for sharing these lands and commit, as an organization and as individuals, to an ongoing relationship that recognizes and respects the lands, traditions, and culture of the Algonquin/Anishinaabe people.

[Click to read full story & see gallery!](#)

At the last Council of Commissioners meeting, held September 24th, Director General George Singfield spoke of the school board's commitment toward the ongoing journey of Truth and Reconciliation. He described how staff members were ensuring students from our schools and centres are learning the lessons that generations before did not and not only on September 30th or in the month of June. He reaffirmed that the board would go beyond words and implement actions that would make a positive difference for Truth and Reconciliation. He ended by reciting a moving poem by Mi'kmaw elder Rita Joe entitled, "I Lost My Talk".

#### I Lost My Talk - by Rita Joe

I lost my talk  
The talk you took away.  
When I was a little girl  
At Shubenacadie school.  
  
You snatched it away:  
I speak like you  
I think like you  
I create like you  
The scrambled ballad, about my word.  
  
Two ways I talk  
Both ways I say,  
Your way is more powerful.  
  
So gently I offer my hand and ask,  
Let me find my talk  
So I can teach you about me.

### Spotlight

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Northern Symposium

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Amy Curry

## Education Spotlight Northern Symposium 2024

The teaching staffs of Noranda and Golden Valley Schools came together on Friday, September 20th for a day of learning and networking.

Facilitated by a team of ten Educational Consultants, the day was centred on instructional strategies across the curriculum, with sessions addressing multiple subjects and grade levels. The opportunity for teachers to select sessions of interest set the stage for high engagement, rich conversations and meaningful learning.

Each session allowed teachers to experience instructional strategies and consider how to implement these tools in their contexts and classrooms. New professional partnerships and connections were formed with excitement for future collaboration.

Principals Amy Barker and Stephanie Frigon were thrilled to bring their teams together and look forward to building on this idea for professional learning. The consultant team was delighted to support in-person learning outside of the WQSB's urban core, with a great appreciation for the teachers' enthusiasm and participation throughout the day.



Photos by Amy Curry



K. Boutin, M. Kelly, C. Loschmann

## HR Spotlight Support Staff Hiring & Wellbeing

As we begin the school year, HR, along with principals and center directors, has been working to ensure all returning and new staff are in place. This year's support staff hiring process involved major updates with the new collective agreement, classroom assistant guidelines, and the transition to GDP. We appreciate everyone's patience and encourage open communication as we navigate evolving employee statuses.

We're also working with principals to improve the hiring process, including starting earlier before summer break. In addition to hiring support staff, we warmly welcome the new teachers joining our school communities.

Remember, your mental and overall wellbeing are important. Access your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 24/7 by phone at 1-800-387-4765. For quick reference, the wallet card is included for details on how to access EAP resources.

We are thankful for the hundreds of support staff who promote student wellbeing and prepare them for learning. Here's to a great school year!



Stuart Gray and Lisa Diner

## Did you know? Education Technology

Did you know that we have a website dedicated to all things "education technology"? You can find it at: [edtech.westernquebec.ca](http://edtech.westernquebec.ca).

On this site, you can find interactive tutorials, resources, and even live calendar booking links to connect with your Education Technology Consultants, Lisa Diner and Stuart Gray. If you forget the website address, you can also always get to the site from the "Quick Links" section of the WQSB homepage at [westernquebec.ca](http://westernquebec.ca).

Let's work together to increase the digital competence of all members of our WQSB community!

  
Your confidential **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**, and resources to support your mental, physical, social, and financial wellbeing.



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- 2 Watch your email inbox for an invitation to join the platform.

Online:  
[one.telushealth.com](http://one.telushealth.com)

Call us:  
1-833-711-2327





Carlee St. Denis

## Complementary Services Spotlight Make and Take TLN Sessions at the Central Office



Special Education Technicians create resources after the presentation



Re-adaptation Officers Janet Sauvé, Carlee St. Denis & Michele Elstone

On Friday September 13th, WQSB's re-adaptation officer (RO) team, Janet Sauvé, Michele Elstone and Carlee St. Denis kicked off the Technician Learning Network (TLN) with a Make and Take session held at the WQSB's central office.

The TLN is now in its third year and provides professional learning and networking opportunities for special education technicians. The TLN sessions are facilitated by professionals and experts in the field who aim to expand knowledge on relevant topics. Our special education technicians can learn practical strategies to continue doing the important work of supporting our students.

At the Make and Take session, the RO team demonstrated how to structure hands-on learning activities that build independence with their students. The participants then had the opportunity to use what they learned; along with the resources provided, to make these activities to take back to their schools.

There are **three more TLN sessions** happening this school year. If you are a special education technician interested in attending an upcoming TLN session, please contact your administrator for approval.

### Wednesday October 9, 2024

2 Half-Day Sessions AM – The Pyramid of Interventions (Part Two), Katherine Korah -Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management PM  
- Introduction to the WQSB Drug Awareness Resource Team (DART)

### Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Full Day Session Universal Design for Learning (UDL): multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), Tier 1 & Inclusive Practices  
- Pam Tupy, Novak Education

### Thursday February 6, 2025

2 Half-Day Sessions AM - Interoception – An introduction to the work of Kelly Mahler. Readaptation Officer Team, Janet Sauve, Michele Elstone, Carlee St. Denis

PM – Assistive Technology – Education technology consultants, Stuart Gray & Lisa Diner



Table full of resources for all levels of learning Photos by Laura D'Alessandro



## From Across the Board!

[Click to watch the Hadley Jr./Philemon Wright High School's Walk for Wenjack](#)



Maniwaki Woodland School

Hadley Jr/PWHS photos by Lori Morrison



Pontiac Continuing Education Centre



Queen Elizabeth Elementary School



G. Théberge School



Laura D'Alessandro

## The WQCC Broadens their Workshops for Visiting WQSB Elementary School Students

The Western Québec Career Centre recently hosted their first successful round of workshops designed for grade 5-6 elementary school students this school year. Students from Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School (PETES), accompanied by staff members Françoise Vermette and Brendan McCabe, spent the day at the WQCC jumping between their Welding, Automotive, Commerce and Health Care programs.

Last school year, visiting grade 5-6 students attended Welding and Automotive workshops, led by Kevin Fredericks and Nick Aubin for welding, and Tim Miller for Automotive with great success. This year, the WQCC has expanded its introductory workshop to include Commerce, Institutional & Homecare Assistance program as well as its Health Assistance and Nursing program.



Cameron Christie plays Basketball Awareness Test for students

Laura D'Alessandro

## Noranda's High School Students Visit the Gatineau/Ottawa Region



Group photo taken with the student-made WQCC letters outside the centre

Noranda's Secondary 3, 4 and 5 students recently had a successful and action-packed visit to the Gatineau/Ottawa region. On their first day they visited the Museum of History, Parliament and CÉGEP Heritage College. On their second day they visited the Western Québec Career Centre, where they were given a tour of the building and introduced to all their programs. Noranda students also had time to shop as well as visit Funhaven in Ottawa. They returned home to Rouyn-Noranda both exhausted and fulfilled!

Special thank you to the WQCC's main organizer, their Guidance Counsellor Liora Richler for orchestrating school visits. She was assisted on the day by the WQCC's Academic Advisor Alex Smith and Recreational Technician Samantha Nicholls. Fifi Anura, WQCC's Student Council president, also addressed the group. The WQCC teachers also go above and beyond creating informative and interactive activities for visiting students.



Fluorescent light demo reveals fake germs

Photos by Brendan McCabe

Lead Teacher and head of the Commerce department, Cameron Christie, took PETES students through a brief introduction of the program but focused on the idea of perception. "Our program focuses on in-class learning and working with students to become more self-aware of their own strengths and areas of personal growth," explained Cameron. To illustrate his point, Cameron shared a classic video containing a hidden (in plain sight) moonwalking bear to demonstrate how we often don't, or can't, see the whole picture unless we are paying attention.

A variety of age-appropriate and engaging healthcare learning activities were set up for the students, such as an effective handwashing demonstration using fake germs and a fluorescent light, a mechanical lift demonstration for clients who have mobility issues or cannot bear weight, as well as tactile experiences such as interacting with the healthcare mannequins and a model of the digestive system. "It was a huge success for everyone involved. The children had an opportunity to have a fun and engaging time while learning about health care," shared Laurie-Anne Hickey, the department head for the WQCC's health care programs.

"It was amazing to see the students engaged in all workshops and learning the different stages of post-secondary," shared, Françoise Vermette, student life animator at PETES. This partnership between the WQCC and our elementary schools not only provides students with an enriching experience but can also help young students broaden their career options earlier on.

Special thank you to PETES' Mrs. Tina for organizing the field trip and to the WQCC's dedicated members of staff for designing these engaging age-appropriate workshops for the visiting students!

From Noranda School's side, a special thank you to Mr. Hamilton who organized the trip, Laurie Boast, who volunteered as a second chaperone and to their bus driver, Serge.



Group photo taken outside Cégep Heritage College. Shoutout to Mr. Kharyati!



Sophie Demers for the Bulletin d'Aylmer

## Aylmer Community Rallies to Honour School Administrative Assistant With Commemorative Benches



Photos by Laura D'Alessandro

Donna Norris was a beloved member of the Lord Aylmer Elementary School community. As an administrative assistant, mother and grandmother, she was loved by many. After passing away from cancer earlier this year, her family wanted to do something to commemorate her and her impact at the school. The idea of installing Buddy Benches came soon after.

"She worked for the Western Quebec School Board for probably around 20 years in different capacities, but mainly she was an administrative assistant," said Norris's daughter Sara Bulhoes, explaining that it was her mother-in-law who first introduced her to the idea of Buddy Benches. "They called her Miss Donna when she was there. She was just very involved in the school. She loved her role working with the children, and she was proud of her work there."

Buddy benches, sometimes referred to as friendship benches, were created to combat isolation, encourage empathy and foster community. Young students can sit on them when they are feeling left out, have no one to play with, or need someone to talk to. The goal is that their peers will see and go and help them.

Written by Stephanie Frigon

## Golden Valley's BTS Rodeo



Saddle up for a wild start to the school year! Golden valley School hosted a Rodeo themed Back-to-School Day for both elementary and secondary students.

We had it all—live farm animals, fun games, inflatables, face painting, and delicious food.

Yeehaw!



After receiving some memorial donations for the benches, word of the project got to Cathy Dubreuil Mellon. Mellon is chair of the governing board for the Western Québec Career Centre (WQCC) and a volunteer and organizer in the community. After hearing of the project, she contacted Wei Jun Shang, the Welding Instructor. By chance, the students' final project this year was park benches.

Two of the students, Keith Stickland and Lin Liluan (Lya Lin) donated their benches. After the benches were acquired, the next step was getting them painted. Mellon went to speak to Stéphane Durand and staff from Aylmer Collision/Fit-It Auto, who offered to paint the benches for free.

Sara Bulhoes then got painted metal rainbow letters spelling "Buddy Bench" made and attached to the benches, as well as a commemorative plaque. The bright blue benches were installed last week, one at Lord Aylmer's junior campus and the other at the senior campus.

According to Mellon, Donna Norris attended the WQCC years ago. Her first placement was at the elementary school where they liked her so much, they hired her permanently. "It's a very full circle moment," she said. "We're very proud. It's a nice way to honour her, said Bulhoes. "She spent a good chunk of her life there and it was something she wanted to get back to doing and she never got back there. So it's kind of nice that there is something there so her time at the school will be remembered."

The generosity of the community meant that there was fundraising money left over. Bulhoes says they are talking to the school and the money will be donated there in the coming weeks.





Photos by Laura D'Alessandro and Fatima Sow

## South Hull Elementary School's Terry Fox Event



Terry Fox lead facilitator Pierre Brodeur jumps with students



"I've been waiting for this all my life," exclaims one very excited birthday boy



Students and staff members happily participated in the event!

Pontiac High School Facebook page

## Pontiac High School's Terry Fox Event



The Terry Fox Run is an annual tradition at Pontiac High School that provides an opportunity for students to pause and reflect and try to think of the good even during tough times.

Thank you to our courageous guest speaker who shared a powerful message with our students.

Thank you to all students, staff and alumni who joined us for the Terry Fox Run this year! Your energy, enthusiasm, and support made it a memorable event. Together, we biked, we ran, walked, and celebrated Terry's legacy while raising funds for cancer research.

A special shoutout to our volunteers, teachers, and the community for making this event a success!





Erin Millar

## Book Lists

### October Book and Resource Lists

October is a very full month! On top of Thanksgiving and Halloween, in Canada it is Cybersecurity Awareness Month as well. Whether we're talking about protecting privacy, cyberbullying, the safe use of social media, or when to disconnect, these resources can help start meaningful conversations about this important subject. Like all our book lists, this is one that will grow with the topic.

I have tried to focus on books that are a) still available for purchase, and b) traditionally published, which makes them easier to purchase from an accredited bookstore here in Quebec.

Wishing us all a colourful, cozy Fall!



Students reading at Namur Intermediate School

### Picture Books

- The Couch Potato\*, by Jory John
- The Fabulous Friend Machine\*, by Nick Bland
- Nerdy Birdy Tweets, by Aaron Reynolds
- Blackout\*, by John Rocco
- Chicken Clicking, by Jeanne Willis
- Doug Unplugged, by Dan Yacarino

### Non-Fiction

- On the Internet: Our First Talk About Online Safety\*, by Jillian Roberts and Jane Heinrichs
- First Phone: A Child's Guide to Digital Responsibility, Safety, and Etiquette, by Catherine Perlman, Ph. D., LCSW
- Better Connected: How Girls Are Using Social Media for Good, by Tanya Lloyd Kyi, Julia Kyi, and Vivian Rosas
- Eyes and Spies: How You're Tracked and Why You Should Know\*, by Tanya Lloyd Kyi
- The Phone Book: Stay Safe, Be Smart, and Make the World Better with the Powerful Device in Your Hand, by Jessica Speer and Lesley Imgart
- Computer Science for Curious Kids, by Chris Oxlade and Nik Neves
- Breaking the News: What's Real, What's Not, and Why the Difference Matters, by Robin Terry Brown
- Can You Believe It?: How to Spot Fake News and Find the Facts, by Joyce Grant
- Big Data: Information in the Digital World with Science Activities for Kids, by Carla Mooney
- Rethink the Internet: How to Make the Digital World A Lot Less Sucky, by Trisha Prabhu
- Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed, by Dashka Slater

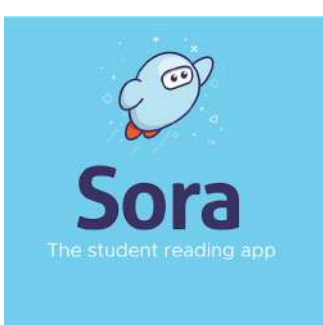
### Online resources

- Zoe & Molly Online: <https://www.zoeandmolly.ca/app/en/>\*
- Activity sheets for kids, Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada: <https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/about-the-opc/what-we-do/awareness-campaigns-and-events/privacy-education-for-kids/t-v/activ/index/>\*
- Kids in the Know, the Canadian Centre Child Protection: [https://www.kidsintheknow.ca/app/en/parents-educational\\_tools](https://www.kidsintheknow.ca/app/en/parents-educational_tools)\*
- Need Help Now, <https://needhelppnow.ca/en/>\*
- Media Smarts, Educational Games: <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/educational-games>\*
- Media Smarts, Canada's Centre for Digital Media Literacy, Secure Comics Lesson Plan: <https://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/secure-comics>
- GetCyberSafe.ca, Government of Canada: <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/en>\*
- The ABCs of Cybersecurity for Kids, Get Cyber Safe: <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/en/resources/abcs-cybersecurity-kids>\*
- Amaze, Being Safe on the Internet: <https://amaze.org/video/being-safe-on-the-internet/>\*
- Kids Help Phone, 5 Online Safety Tips: <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/5-online-safety-tips-everyone-needs-to-know/>\*
- Kids Help Phone, How Can I Protect My Privacy When Using Social Media?: <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/how-can-i-protect-my-privacy-when-using-social-media/?>\*

\*resource is also available in French

Written by Sunglee Randall

## Spotlight on the Virtual Library



This month's Spotlight on the Virtual Library is our reading resource, Sora. This resource is available to all students and staff and includes e-books, audiobooks, magazines and comics, with hundreds of titles available in English and French. Sora can be accessed directly from our Virtual Library in a web browser or downloaded as an app to use on a mobile device.

After searching for 'Western Quebec School Board', students and staff must sign in with their WQSB email credentials. Any technical issues should be sent to Sunglee Randall at [srandall@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:srandall@wqsb.qc.ca).

Happy Reading!



## Found in the WQSB Time Capsule

This photo was recently found in the WQSB time capsule.  
Can you guess who it is?

This young girl would grow up to be extremely helpful, positive, and a source of inspiration with colleagues as well as with primary and secondary students. Periodically, there is a large volume of students who book time to hear this expert storyteller share her tall tales.

She is also something of an escape artist who shares her knowledge with others looking for adventure, mystery or a new thrill. Highly dedicated to her profession, to her students and to the staff, the WQSB is fortunate to have this exemplary leader as part of its team.



## Stay connected



Every Child Matters student-made art at Greater Gatineau Elementary School

## Gazette Editions

- Issue 06 - June 2024
- Issue 05 - May 2024
- Issue 04 - April 2024

- Issue 03 - March 2024
- Issue 02 - February 2024
- Issue 01 - January 2024

**THANK YOU!**

We extend our gratitude to our contributors this month.

*George Singfield, Laura D'Alessandro, Amy Curry, Krystal Boutin, Mackenzie Kelly, Claudia Loschmann, Carlee St. Denis, Janet Sauv , Michele Elstone, Stuart Grey, Lisa Diner, Damian Curley, Cameron Christie, Laurie-Anne Hickey, Lori Morrison, Brendan McCabe, Frankie Vermette, Sophie Demers, Stephanie Frigon, Fatima Sow, Erin Millar and Lee Randall.*

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*Gazette created by Fatima Sow and Laura D'Alessandro*

Have a WQSB story to share? Reach out to our team!