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of Vanier Road in the Aylmer sector of Gatineau.

The two major Board wide undertakings are the creation and implementation of a Five Year Strategic Plan and the evaluation of the Delivery of Educational Services. Both these tasks are predicated on the continuing implementation of the Quebec Education Plan, the projected decline in our student enrollment from 2006 to 2009 and "the need to do things differently".

A draft of the Five Year Strategic Plan should be ready for public consultation in the near future while the Delivery of Educational Services initiative will involve a series of Town Hall Meetings to start early in 2005. The Town Hall meetings will evaluate and recommend improvements that will affect all our schools into the future.

All those involved in the Western Quebec School Board community are encouraged to participate and supply input into both of these very important initiatives.

The new high school construction is planned to begin by the latter part of this year.

On behalf of the Council of Commissioners I would like to thank all of our community for their dedication and hard work in all the aspects of educating our students.

Have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

On Behalf of the Council of Commissioners,



Mitch Lavery  
Chairman  
Western Quebec School Board



## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL



As we approach the holiday season I would like to take note of some important things that have passed since the opening of schools, a time so long ago to children and only yesterday to adults. To begin I need to pay homage to the unsung heroes of our system - the secretaries and maintenance staff. I had the pleasure of dropping in on six schools for opening day. This is always a special time - students buzzing in anticipation and expectation for a new and great school year, teachers excited and anxious to meet new and familiar students and challenges, and the supporting cast around them ready to do what is needed to make everyone's year a success. This year I took the time to notice both the condition of the buildings and the commotion around the hub of any school on day one, and perhaps everyday - the secretary's desk. Although it was no real surprise that everything was "squared away", it was truly a marvel to see how these overlooked and taken for granted people take care of business in the Western Quebec School Board. Every building, no matter how old, what the configuration, or the renovations required over the summer was immaculate, safe, and secure. Without these "bottom lines" no education can take place. I invite comparisons with other boards - you will find nothing to match us anywhere. The secretaries were as usual making magical things happen. I watched them tend to paper, parents, students, staff, the phone, the fax, the e-mail, all in good grace, and seemingly all at the same time. It is important for all of us to recognize the value of these dedicated employees and how much they mean to our system. I want to congratulate each and every one of them. I know they would appreciate a small thank-you next time you visit a school.

Of late the annual Fraser Report ranking high schools throughout the province was released. It was not kind to the Western Quebec School Board in particular, or the English school system in general. Obviously we want to be the best by any measure, but in this case some balance and proportion needs to be provided on behalf of the dedicated and hard-working educators of this system who are being "bashed" by a study that ignores many important factors in school success. Cautions need to be given before jumping to conclusions about the quality of our schools. To begin, the report is a year plus out of date since it is based on data from 2003. Furthermore,

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the rankings are based heavily on final examination results, only one factor in assessing school success. The report does not factor in other important variables, for example, the knowledge base of students writing the exam. The Western Quebec School Board, in fact most English language schools, does not limit access to writing exams. Elsewhere, many students who do not reach a certain standard based on term results are not permitted to write finals. Obviously this has a large impact on final examination success rates. Another problem with the report is the straight comparison of public to private schools. The former has universal access, the latter chooses clientele based on academic achievement, AND can ask students to leave if they don't achieve. Finally, evaluation tools and methods that account for at least half of a student's final mark vary from school to school and board to board. Comparisons are not always equal. Throw in the moderation of marks by the Ministry of Education and you do not have a standard way of assessing anything. It should also be noted that many of our schools are small, so in a given year less than ten students in a school may write a final in a subject. This significantly affects rates. For example, if 5 students write an exam and all pass, you have a 100% pass rate. The next year it may be 4 out of 5 - a drop of 20% relating to only one student. Looks bad on paper, but doesn't reflect the reality of the school.

We are working with all our schools to increase success - and it is showing results. Our board has consistently improved. I am proud to say we now rank 5<sup>th</sup> in the province against the nine English school boards...an improvement of 4 places in seven years. It should be mentioned that if graduation rates (number of students who achieve a high school leaving certificate) were used instead of test scores, the English system surpasses all but a few private schools. The Western Quebec School Board is by far the best board in both our regions based on this criterion. Our dedicated principals, teachers, and support staff truly care about our students. They have created schools where the whole student is considered and the affective domain is well cared for. They have also embarked upon a dialogue of assessing students one by one - measuring achievement against potential. They are less concerned about everyone getting "A's" and more with if the student is working to full capacity. These are the true measures of success.

As we approach the end of another calendar year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe, healthy, and wonderful holiday season. May the New Year bring the best to all!

Mike Dawson  
Director General

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WESTERN QUEBEC SCHOOL BOARD



To the Western Quebec School Board Community,

A belated **Welcome Back To School** to all our students, parents, teachers, support staff and administrators as well as the larger Western Quebec School Board Community.

The beginning of the new school year has come and gone with the memory of fresh faced students and well rested teachers walking through the school doors. The year started off extremely well and congratulations are extended to all those who worked so diligently to make this start so successful.

I would like to pass on good wishes to all our students on their first term of the 2004-2005 school year. Work hard, play hard and enjoy the school experience; your future depends on it.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's school life. If you require information or would like to help your children attain better school results, please don't be shy, talk to the teachers, talk to the Principal, talk to the senior administrators or talk to your Commissioners. **Student Success** is what we are all about.

With over three months of the school year already behind us and the Holiday Season fast approaching, an update on the activities of the Council of Commissioners of the Western Quebec School Board is appropriate at this time.

In addition to our ongoing efforts to improve **Student Success**, the Council of Commissioners will pursue two major School Board wide initiatives starting this year. Besides these board wide initiatives we are also moving ahead with the planning and construction of the new high school just off

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## GOLDEN VALLEY SCHOOL 'S SENIOR STUDENTS RESPOND TO DRUG PREVENTIONIST JADE BELL'S PRESENTATION

Late last spring Kathryn Austin, Spiritual Animator, convinced Jade Bell and his caregiver, Martina, to travel north to present his story to students in our northern schools. The students were able to meet him and see first hand how drastically his life has changed as a direct result of his drug use. His "straight to the point" message left his audiences astounded. The following are some senior Golden Valley students' responses to Jade's presentation.

What I will never forget about Jade Bell is that he did something and that it was stupid, but he fights to live. He is brave and, though he doesn't have everything we have, he is trying hard. He is lucky to have survived what he went through. *Jessica Smith*

What I will always remember after listening to and meeting Jade Bell is that I will never ever take drugs or too much alcohol, and that if I do I will know that there may be many consequences.

Jade Bell said that the condition he was in was like being in hell, and I surely don't want to be like that. *Eloise Bélanger*

I feel sad and mad for him. Sad because he can't see, walk or play sports. He was paralysed in one finger snap. Mad because on TV they always talk about drugs and drinking; people are dying of drugs. *Gabriel Aubin Boivin*

I will never forget the courage Jade Bell had to come and visit other schools to share his tragic story with everybody so other teenagers will not make the same mistake as him and end up like him. *Ariane Cloutier*

After meeting jade Bell, I felt shocked, scared and sad. I felt shocked because I didn't know that drugs could do that to people. I felt scared because I don't want this to happen to the people I care about. I felt sad for him, because it's sad how he lives his life now. *Sarah Szabadkai*

Ruth Cowley  
Coordinator, Spiritual Care and Guidance Service

## " LOOK YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT BEING GOOD ! " AT DR. S.E. MCDOWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Nicholas Tubman, Stephanie Votour, Maggie Smith, Dylan Hodgins, Carter Pirie, Brandon McCoshen, Craig Desabrais, Hailey Hodgins, Cody Laurant, Jack Kelly, David Lake, and Travis Kluge were recognized for the week of October 11 - 15, 2004 by their classrooms in the weekly draw. Students are encouraged throughout their day from teachers and support staff to do good onto others. Under the Cross-Curricular Competencies to cooperate with others, the students are recognized when they interact with an open mind in various contexts throughout their school day beyond the classroom. The McDowell Home and School Association graciously advocates and supports this initiative through tokens of appreciation on a weekly basis with a treat at the office. Todd Kline, school custodian, brought in a 1089 pound pumpkin that the staff and children decorated in a display.



October 11—15, 2004  
Winners

Congratulations to our weekly winners!

Stewart Aitken  
Principal



## FLAT STANLEY TRAVELS ACROSS WQSB DAYCARES

In the book, *Flat Stanley*, by Jeff Brown, Stanley is a flat boy who visits friends by traveling in an envelope. Daycare students at Golden Valley School in Val D'Or and at Dr. S.E. McDowell Elementary in Shawville will share stories and pictures of their lives with their Flat Stanley penpals. With this positive literacy project the students will take pictures of Flat Stanley participating in everyday family and special activities. In accompanying letters they will be able to share stories about their lives in their regions. For updates on Flat Stanley and his adventures watch for the next issue of the Highlighter.

Anne Armitage, Pre-K/Daycare Consultant

## WAKEFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON THE MOVE



### Artists in their Environment

Wakefield students had the joy of visiting local artists during the annual *Artists in their Environment Tour*. Students viewed photographs, made candles, explored environmental art and painted watercolours. What an experience! Special thanks to the following Wakefield artists: Carole Goodman, Helene Ann Fortin, Louis Rompre and Marc Walters. For more information on the annual *Artists in their Environment Tour* please visit [www.arttourchelseawakefield.com](http://www.arttourchelseawakefield.com).

### Western Quebec School Board's Cross Country Run 2004

Two hundred and thirty Western Quebec students from seven schools ran up and down the mighty Wakefield hills during this year's cross country run. The course was approximately 2km in length. The top three runners in each category won medals. Buckingham Elementary won the *Spirit Award* this year. Thanks to all the parent helpers and coaches who made this day so successful!



Wakefield Elementary

Rolla McIntosh  
Principal

## "WHO DUNNIT?" AT CHELSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Miss Kerman, our Grade 5 teacher in Chelsea School was teaching us how to solve mysteries. In late October we were presented with a Murder Mystery called *The Case of the Missing Millionaire*. We learned the difference between red herrings, clues, facts and inferences.

The first day at the crime scene we were given some information to start us off, but it was not very much. The crime scene was about 7 feet by 10 feet. There was an outline of a dead body, some footprints and other clues positioned carefully around it. The setting was a patio off a one bathroom, two bedroom beach house. All we were asked to do that day was document the evidence.



The Crime Scene

Only on the second day did we find out who was murdered, and who the suspects were. The suspects were: Vera Cruise, Kendra Goode, Alfredo Fettuccine and Gene Poule. The victim was Felix Navidad. Who murdered him? That's what we were supposed to figure out.

We were put into groups of 4 and for the next two days we did forensic science tests to help figure out who did it. After two days worth of DNA and PH testing we found fingerprints, poison and a horrible smelling perfume. During our DNA testing the majority of our class thought that Vera Cruise was the one to blame but in the end, most of our class agreed that Kendra Goode was guilty and should go to jail!

We wanted to do a trial but realized that we did not have enough evidence to charge anyone because the body had disappeared on the way to the morgue. It's really too bad because our whole class wanted to do it. In the end it turned out that this case would be called *a cold case*.

The big question still is Who Dunnit if in fact Felix is dead!

Lauren Evenson, David Lapins, Vicki Piche, Chelsea Wright  
Chelsea Elementary School Students

## LORD AYLMER SCHOOL IMPLEMENTS THE VIRTUES PROJECT

The Virtues Project is a comprehensive way to create a culture of character within the new curriculum reform guidelines. Coordinated by The Community Care and Guidance and Spiritual Animation Service, this program is being piloted at Lord Aylmer School this year. The program will be implemented in the following ways:



Students in Mme Christine's and Mme Valerie's class display their Virtues artwork.

- Seven Virtues - Enthusiasm, Peacefulness, Thankfulness, Respect, Friendliness, Responsibility and Self-discipline - will be focused on over the coming school year,
- Assemblies will be held at the end of each theme where the Virtue is summarized through student driven activities such as skits, plays, poetry, music etc. Guest speakers will be invited to participate if appropriate,
- Teachers and specialist teachers will incorporate the Virtues project in class projects and activities. At the beginning of each theme, each teacher is provided with suggestions/ideas/ reference and resource materials for this virtue. The Virtue project is designed to work *within* the teachers curriculum, not in addition to his/her current workload.

The Lord Aylmer Home and School has generously offered to support the creation of a Virtues Library to support the Project in developing a strong resource of reading materials on each theme.

The first Virtue Assembly on "Enthusiasm" on October 4<sup>th</sup> was a resounding success! The students saw some beautiful artwork from Mme Valerie and Mme Christine's class, heard skits and cheers and quotes from famous people, listened to a rap song by Mr. Perron's Grade 6 class, and awarded its first "Enthusiasm Award" to the school custodian, Lee Beaudoin.



An "Enthusiasm" Rap performed by some Grade 6 students in Mr. Perron's class.

Joyel Singfield, Spiritual Animator

## GREATER GATINEAU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS REACH OUT ...

### ACROSS THE WORLD: THE UGANDA PROJECT

Last June the students of Mrs. Lafleur's Cycle 3.1 class had the opportunity to collect money and school supplies for the children of AIDS victims in Uganda. The students set a goal to collect: 500 pencils, 500 pens, 500 wax crayons, 500 markers and 500 pencil crayons in only a two week period. The students reached out to their schoolmates for help in reaching this lofty goal.



Carol Seaby and Caroline Nkaenga visit GG Elementary

They collected supplies both old and new from all students of the school. The students sold popsicles to raise money to help reach their goal. Math, Social Science and Literature were all incorporated into this activity. The children wrote letters to accompany the supplies. At the end of the two weeks 1,000 of each item had been collected.

Two friends of the orphans, Carol Seaby and Caroline Nakayenga headed to Uganda in early July with the supplies. They distributed supplies to many happy children. They reported "The children of Uganda could not believe that children in Canada had collected these supplies for them". Immediately the children sat down to draw and write letters back to their new friends in Canada. They were so thankful for these wonderful supplies. In September, the two friends came to speak to the student body at an assembly. A power point presentation and messages of thanks were delivered from the children in Uganda.

The Greater Gatineau students felt they had truly done something wonderful. The experience has been a lifelong learning experience that will be a treasured memory for both the students and the teachers. **THEY HAVE REACHED OUT ACROSS THE WORLD AND TOUCHED SO MANY WITH WHAT MOST OF US TAKE FOR GRANTED.... A PENCIL!** Mrs.

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Lafleur's former students and her new students want to help again this year. They are making their plans now so watch for the upcoming events.

#### ACROSS THEIR COMMUNITY: CAMP TRILLIUM



Ms. Lalonde and Ally talk about their real life experience with leukemia.

In October the students from Ms. Bailey's class, began a study of the novel *Sadko* and the *Thousand Cranes*. The students wanted to learn more about leukemia, a disease affecting a child in the novel. They invited Ms Lalonde, our school technician and mother of Ally, a young leukemia survivor, to visit the class. The two guests talked about their real life experience with leukemia treatment. The students were so moved by Ally's story that they planned a

fundraiser for Camp Trillium, a camp for children with cancer. The Bake Sale and Used Book Sale raised \$500.00 for CampTrillium. This group of Cycle 3.1 students has learned to be compassionate, caring members of the Community.

Sandra Chenard  
Principal

### D'ARCY MCGEE SECONDARY SCHOOL TO HOST ALGONQUIN COLLEGE'S EXPO

The Algonquin College career fair will be held at D'Arcy McGee Secondary School from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, 2004. We are cordially inviting senior students from our secondary institutions to attend this special showcase of Algonquin College's unique educational programming. Twenty to thirty programs including hospitality, trades, engineering, and media and design will set up interactive information booths for the participants. Members of Algonquin College's teaching and liaison departments are looking forward to meeting with secondary school students, parents and staff. Please contact Myra Borts at 777-3121 (ext. 2191) or by e-mail at [mborts@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:mborts@wqsb.qc.ca) for more information.

## WQSB DEVELOPMENTAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

We should all be proud of the results of the first year of the Western Quebec Developmental Football League. The principals of Hadley, Pontiac and Symmes schools generated funding for the equipment outside of the regular school budget, recruited volunteer coaching staffs and officials for the program.

Boys and Girls from grade seven and eight were eligible for the team. All three schools had full squads and everyone participated in the games. The schedule was one home and away game for each team. Symmes Junior High team played an exhibition game against Alexander Galt in Lennoxville.

Teams had four downs to make ten yards. Players could not play both ways (offense and defense) and the defense was not allowed to blitz. All the games were very exciting; in two games the final outcome was decided on the last play.



WQSB Developmental Football League

I would like to thank everyone who attended the games. Saturday afternoon football has brought back a lot of very good memories. I cannot wait for next fall!

#### COACHES' CORNER

- Hadley Hawks:** Dave Fisher, Peter Connolly, Jay Roberts, Larry St-Martin, Kevin Drysdale, and Mark Fisher
- Pontiac Panthers:** Kerry Timm, Richard Valin, Gordon Graham, and Bernie More
- Symmes Scorpions:** Mike Balenko, Paul Sullivan, Michael Reid, and George Singfield

Greg Charron  
Superintendent of Technology

## FINE DINING AT D'ARCY MCGEE

Two choices of lasagne, three choices of beverage, two choices of salad, and two choices of desert adds up to a great lunch menu. Students from Ms. Junek and Ms. Mongeon's class produced the first of what is hoped to be a regular offering from the D'Arcy Café.



Fine Dining at D'Arcy McGee

Inspired by ventures in the kitchen on the second floor last year, Ms. Junek organized her students, with the help of Ms. Mongeon, to produce a restaurant experience including servers dressed in black and white, chefs, and clean up crew. Staff members ordered their \$5.00 meals ahead of time and are enthusiastic about doing it again. Our secretary at the front desk, Monique Roy, thought the whole thing was "just great," and noted that it was quite a treat.

The students have made a big step forward in their experience. As they continue to run the D'Arcy Café they will develop skills that very few high school students can.

Mr. Mason  
Vice-Principal

## NAMUR INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL RAISES \$2242.10 FOR THE TERRY FOX FOUNDATION

For thirteen consecutive years, Namur Intermediate School has participated in the annual Terry Fox Run to raise funds for cancer research. On September 23, students, teachers, and parent volunteers walked or ran ten kilometres and raised \$2242.10. Over all this rural school of about 100 students has raised \$21,444.27 for the Terry Fox Foundation. Top fund-raisers this year are Sara Vaive Proulx (\$410), Melissa Bolliger (\$195), Jonathan Varin (\$133), and Valerie Boyer who donated \$130 of her own money. Our goal for 2005, the 25th anniversary of the run, is to reach \$25,000! Terry's dream continues to inspire communities to find the cure.

Michael Haramis, Principal

## ACTION DAY AT MANIWAKI WOODLAND SCHOOL



Tapping Into Your Inner  
Wisdom through painting.

Along with several other high schools in our board, Maniwaki Woodland School has a NANS (New Approaches, New Solutions) project meant to boost success of high school students. This program is funded by the Quebec Ministry of Education and targets schools in disadvantaged areas. The project at Maniwaki Woodland School has several key components which address student success:

**A NANS Technician** monitors student attendance and provides direct intervention with families for students experiencing problems with this area of school life.

**A Mentoring Program** provides students at all levels, Secondary 1-5 with an opportunity to set academic targets and personal goals to be monitored by professional staff. This program has compulsory sessions for students once per 9 day cycle.

**Action Days** held at least once each school term provide opportunities for students to take part in sessions meant to enhance their school experience both personally and academically.

**16+ Life Skills / Work Placement program.**

Our first Action Day was held on Friday, October 15 under the direction of our NANS coordinator Brenda Morrison. Four multi-level groups, EARTH, WIND, FIRE, and WATER were able to participate in 4 different sessions during the day. Sessions included Vark Learning Styles with Brenda Morrison, Sports Psychology led by Fay McLaughlin, *Goal Setting* with Kelly Butler and *Tapping Into Your Inner Wisdom* with Lee Lovsin and Ruth Cowley.

Students report a great deal of satisfaction with their mini courses and look forward to their next Action Day.

Gary Hannam  
Principal



Students work together to reach their team's goal in the Goal Setting workshop.

## "COME READ WITH ME" AT MANIWAKI WOODLAND SCHOOL

In March and April of 2004, several students from Maniwaki Woodland School participated in the **Come Read With Me** contest sponsored by Literacy Partners of Quebec, The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The competition encourages young people to take a greater interest in reading for pleasure and promotes Canadian Literature. Cycle 1 students are invited to create a picture in response to a story and Cycle 2 and 3 students produce a written response. There were over 1200 entries from 41 schools across the province. The students in Ann Addleman's class read and responded to the beautifully illustrated story, *Sky Sisters*, by Canadian author Jan Bourdeau Waboose.



Rose Seguin with children's author Mary-Louise Gay at the Awards Ceremony.

We are pleased to announce that **Rose Seguin** has won the Come Read with Me contest for Cycle 2 students of the Western Quebec School Board. As a winner Rose was awarded a \$75 gift certificate and the school has been presented with a \$500 gift certificate for the purchase of books. Rose, her family and the principal, Mr. Hannam, attended the awards ceremony in Montreal on October 5, 2004.

Congratulations Rose! We are very proud of you!

Anne Addleman  
Teacher

## A SPECIAL INVITATION FOR MANIWAKI WOODLAND SCHOOL STUDENTS

Paula Arsenault's Cycle 2, Year 2 class received an invitation from the South African High Commission to attend a storytelling session on October 1, 2004. This event was held at the National Library of Canada as part of the Ottawa International Writer's Festival. While at the library students attended storytelling sessions given by representatives of South Africa and First Nations Communities.

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After visiting the Children's Literature Exhibit students were bussed to the South African High Commission on Sussex Drive. They were brought on a tour of the High Commission building and then enjoyed a picnic on the beautiful grounds of the Governor General's residence

Once back at school the students wrote letters to Liana Hattingh, first secretary of the African High Commission, to thank her for providing them with the opportunity and funding that made this experience possible. It was a wonderful day.

Ann Addleman  
Teacher

## CHELSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S AFTER-FOUR PROGRAM



Chelsea Elementary School's After-Four (A-4) staff and students.

Many exciting events have been happening at Chelsea A-4. On October 8 some Cycle 1, 2 and 3 students enjoyed a spooky visit to Saunders Farm. On the same day 29 students competed in the Regional Cross-country running event held at Louis-Joseph High School. Also in October, six students from Cycle 3 had the privilege to attend a flag football tournament held at Frank Claire Stadium.

Our students competed against older students who attend junior high school. All of our students benefited from the two months of training and continue to be involved and enjoy flag football.

In addition to these special events, the students continue to be busy participating in arts and crafts, sports, gymnastics, ultimate tennis and many other fun activities!

Carmen Griffith,  
Daycare Responsible