



THE VOICE OF
THE PARENT IN
EDUCATION

QFHSA NEWS

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FALL 2019



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Message from the President



Linton Garner

SCHOOL IS BACK and I know not a moment too soon for some of you. The start of the school year means a new teacher, sometimes a new school, new friends and a seemingly endless list of new school supplies. Back to school also means

general assemblies, school BBQs and hopefully, in your school, the beginning of another fabulous year of home and school activities. I know many of you have started already as I attended two great meetings in Hull and Aylmer, at Pierre Elliot Trudeau and Lord Aylmer elementary schools respectively, just last week.

This new year, however familiar its beginnings, may end up being a very different reality than we are used to living. The CAQ government's plans to eliminate school boards has come to fruition. The government introduced a 'projet de loi' on October 1st within which, the government maintains, is protection of the constitutional rights of the English-speaking community. So far, we have the *projet de loi* but the 90-page document must be read carefully.

The QFHSA and many other English-speaking community organizations and institutions are extremely concerned, that with the reorganizational structure replacing school boards with school service centers, our community may lose management and control of our educational system. In previous Supreme Court cases (notably *Mahe v Alberta*), the right of minority linguistic communities (French-speaking in this case) to maintain the management and control of their institutions was upheld.

In other jurisdictions such as the Yukon, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, where school boards have been eliminated,

those governments chose to be constitutionally compliant, and preserved their respective French language boards. The QFHSA along with our community partners like the Quebec English School Board Association (QESBA) and the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) and the English Parents' Committee Association, have all been advocating for the Quebec government to do the same and respect the guarantees we hold, under the Canadian Charter of Right and Freedoms. It comes as a relief that Section 23 of the Canadian Constitution has protected our minority community as well.

Another challenge facing our community and that of other minority communities is Law 21. The ban on the wearing of religious symbols by public servants, including teachers, administrators and support staff, is troubling to say the least, and an outrageous affront on our human rights at its worst. The use of the notwithstanding clause to avoid having to comply with either the Canadian or the Quebec charters of rights, is a mean spirited and underhanded way to avoid public debate and discussion about what our society has always considered to be one of our basic human rights: Freedom of religion.

You may wonder or think to yourself, why should I be concerned? You may even agree that there should be separation between church and state, and that our government is right in promoting a secular state. On the surface I think most Canadians might agree with it too, but if you look at what Law 21 really does, the banning of religious symbols for those in authoritative positions within the government or public service, it is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. In fact, the use of the Notwithstanding-clause changes the whole game and reveals just how much more this sector of the population's rights are taken away from them.

Law 21 denies Quebecers the following Rights as well;

Freedom of Expression



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Freedom of Peaceful Assembly
 Freedom of Conscience
 Freedom of the Press
 As well as;
 The right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure
 The right not to be arbitrarily detained or imprisoned and
 The right to the presumption of innocence
 Law 21 also denies the right to due process or procedural rights by denying them the;
 Right to a Hearing
 Right to a Jury or Judge
 Right to an Attorney
 These issues are substantive in and of themselves, and all Quebecers should be concerned. The rights now denied these communities form the basis of our fundamental rights and freedoms. These rights are what we have always defined as being fundamentally democratic and fundamentally Canadian. Essentially, rights and freedoms expressed in both our Quebec

and Canadian Charters, have been the measuring stick by which we have compared ourselves to other societies and various repressive regimes around the world. The manner in which Law 21 has been applied, in using the not-withstanding-clause, basically eviscerates the charters and states the rights therein are a bare-faced lie.

In closing, I believe Law 21 is an unjust law and as Martin Luther King once said, “One has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws”. It seems our society is going backwards and reversing the progress we have made and going back to a by-gone time. It reminds me of the old spiritual ‘Amazing Grace’, that when we reverse its sentiments we end up with the phrase “ I once was found, but now I’m lost, I once did see but now I’m blind”.

The QFHSA has joined the Coalition Inclusion Québec to protest this unjust law. We are doing our part by also being a distribution point for the buttons that have Law 21 circled and a line through Law 21. Should any one desire any for their association please contact Carol Meindl at the head office.

Executive Director’s Message



Carol Meindl

SORTING OUT PRIORITIES

The QFHSA office has been busy this September, just as busy as our member associations have undoubtedly been. Along with planning for Executive Workshops, Fall Conference, the Anniversary Banquet, our continuing “A History of Achievement” project, and processing the local association paper work that floods in around this time of year, we are active with the “No

to Law 21” Button Campaign. In addition to hosting the Campaign Coordinators meetings at the QFHSA Board room, receiving shipments of buttons and handling the donations and contributions that come in to support the production of the buttons, we are approaching other organizations to contribute and distribute as well.

It is not acceptable to say, “This law does not affect me personally, so why should I get involved? This is someone else’s problem.” The uncomfortable truth is, next time it may affect us and then it will not be reasonable to expect others to rally to protect our own basic human rights when we did not bother to protect theirs.

The insidious part of this law is that it violates the “presumed

Innocent until proven guilty” tenant on which our justice system is predicated. This law assumes that an individual wearing a religious symbol is guilty of proselytizing without even opening their mouth- “silent and passive proselytizing”. It assumes that, by virtue of their decision to wear a head scarf or turban, they are “shouting from a mountain top”. It seems absurd to hold a fear that a teacher may reflect a religious belief, when the Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum encourages our students to explore the cultures and traditions of other religions, especially considering many of their fellow students often come from those same diverse backgrounds.

Law 21 teaches fear: students to fear their teachers and teachers to fear the parents’ community and their administration. To fear the State as Linton Garner points out in his message, this law is about more than just not being able to wear a religious symbol while working. It also affects freedom of expression. This is a slippery slope on which we dare not lose our footing.

If you feel the same way, get a NL21 button and wear it every day with a religious symbol. Wear it all winter. Those who are affected by this law and their families will take comfort and find courage when they see individuals willing to visibly stand against this law.

Literacy News

QFHSA HAS APPRECIATED the opportunity to partner with First Book Canada over the past few years to provide top quality board books for our Born to Read program. Our literacy program continues to evolve. We have a selection of new books available for our Home and Schools to distribute to needy families in their schools.

We encourage our students to read, and we emphasize how important it is, but the sad truth is that many homes simply do not have children’s book available for their kids. Community libraries are not always within driving distance and school library books must be returned after

a few weeks use.

It is important for kids to have books of their own. Talk to your principal about how many families in your school might be identified as benefitting from having books to take home and keep. Then contact the QFHSA office and we will ship the books to you.

Your principal can decide how and when is best to distribute them. He/she may wish to keep a selection of books in the office to give out to kids when it seems appropriate. Kids can NEVER have too many books!



Literacy Project Update

QFHSA HAS SUPPORTED the Born to Read project for many years, as a firm believer in the importance of parents reading to their infants as soon as possible. Children learn much from their parents reading to them: vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation. Even if they cannot speak themselves, they come to recognize words and understand them in context with objects they see.

QFHSA’s literacy program continues to benefit from a partnership with First Book Canada in the purchase of first quality board books for children 0-3-years olds. This year, QFHSA will be expanding the program by partnering with Benny Farm’s “On Our Own” program and Head and Hands “Young Parents” program. Both

these programs offer workshops to young parents on life skills, counselling and other supports.

QFHSA will provide these programs with Born to Read bags and a selection of board books to give to the parents participating in their workshops on early literacy for infants. Each family will have a good start on a collection of children’s books and QFHSA will continue to offer additional books to add to their home library.

QFHSA would like to thank the support of the **Department of Canadian Heritage, First Book Canada** and our own membership, for helping us reach out to the surrounding English-speaking community to promote literacy and school readiness for children at risk.

A History of Achievement Exhibition Banners For Loan

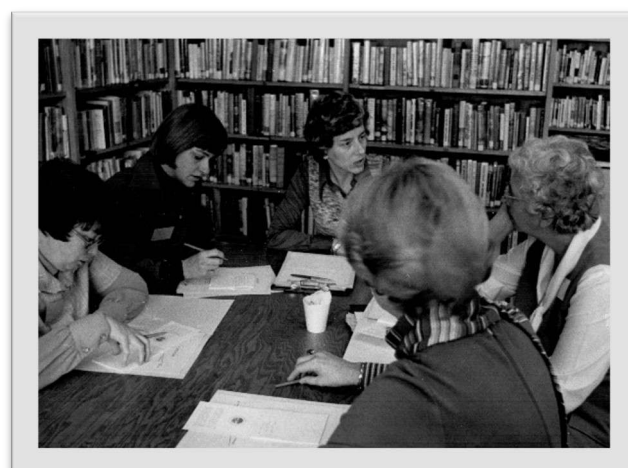
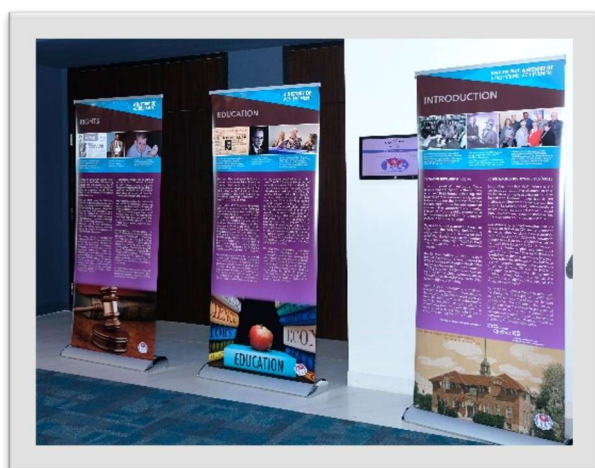
HOME AND SCHOOL in Quebec has had a proud history. Parents have been volunteering their time, (blood, sweat and tears) for their local associations, and pooling their resources to enhance school life for all the students, not just their own.

Every year, membership campaigns get underway and new parents are invited to get involved and “carry the torch onward”.

Our “A History of Achievement” banners, which some of you may have seen at the Annual General Meet-

ing in May, are available for loan to associations to enhance their membership campaigns and other events. There are 9 banners in all: Introductory, Rights, Education, Literacy Projects, Health and Welfare, Transportation and Safety, Communication, Leadership and Citizenship. There are French language banners available as well.

If you would like to reserve a banner or two for an upcoming event, contact the office. We can arrange for pick up or drop off.



Youth Exploring Science



ing and nurturing an interest in science.

By providing science experiment materials/equipment to high schools in the regions, through our **Youth Exploring Science** program, QFHSA hopes to encourage science activities proposed by high school science educators.

We ask that you pass on to your science teachers our invitation to propose a science activity they would like to conduct with their students in the 2019-2020

THE QUEBEC FEDERATION of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) wishes to encourage tomorrow’s scientists by supporting today’s students in develop-

school year and submit it to us. The chosen proposal will receive up to **\$1000 in equipment/materials** to conduct the experiment/project.

The proposal should include: a description and outline of the project, the number of students likely to benefit, directly and indirectly, and a detailed list of equipment / materials required for the project. For more information, contact the office: info@qfhsa.org or call 514 481 5619.

Proposals can be mailed to Carol Meindl, c/o Youth Exploring Science, 3285 Cavendish Blvd, Suite 560, Montreal, QC H4B 2L9.

Teachers know the best ways to reach their students and which activities will interest them the most. We look forward to playing a role in getting students more interested in science.

“No to Law 21” provincial campaign a success!

THE OPPOSITION TO LAW 21 has not disappeared. It is still on going! Everyone working against Law 21 is invited to contribute in their own way. Many are involved in a variety of activities, such as the NL21 Button campaign of which QFHSA was a supporter.

The NL21 Campaign aimed to have Quebecers from all walks of life, across the province, wear a "No to Law 21" button (50,000 have been distributed throughout Quebec) and a religious symbol of choice, throughout the month of September.

The month of action culminated in public actions throughout the province on October 6th, in Montreal, Sherbrooke and Gatineau. This was parallel to, and in support of, the legal challenges to the law that have been launched.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) was a partner in this campaign. Coordinator meetings were held in the QFHSA Board room, boxes of buttons were shipped to our NDG location as a distribution hub and we collected donations through Canada Helps and will issue tax receipts for donations that have come into the office directly (\$10 donations and above). Now our partnership in this effort is about to be taken to the next level.

There are several court cases being brought against the Quebec Government challenging Law 21. Although the lawyers working on these cases are doing so *pro bono*, there are still costly court fees to be paid. (see

article on Coalition Inclusion Quebec) QFHSA has offered to continue our role of collecting funds, this time toward the court fees, as an expression of our continued opposition to this law.

How can Home & School help?

1) Donate to the cause. Write a cheque in the name of your Associations: payable to QFHSA (with Law 21 court challenge or Loi 21 court challenge indicated in the memo field) and mail to: QFHSA, 3285 Cavendish, Suite #560, Montreal, Quebec H4B 2L9.

or

2) Donate online: through QFHSA: <https://bit.ly/2Z63PuQ> (choose Law 21 Campaign) ***This will help cover the court costs.***

3) Wear NL21 buttons: Buttons will be available at Fall Conference this November.

4) Promote the Campaign: Follow, Like and Share the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nonl21>

Just because Bill 21 is now Law 21, does not means we must just accept it and move on. The notwithstanding clause is only in effect for 5 years and then the law can be reversed. Keep the opposition to this divisive law visible! **WEAR A BUTTON! WEAR A RELIGIOUS SYMBOL! SUPPORT THE COURT CHALLENGES!**



Membership Services

WELCOME to a new Home and School year! For Home and School Associations it is September that “comes in like a lion”, not March.

Items that are due:

- Executive list, local association renewal form, administration fee, President’s 2018-2019 activity report, Treasurer’s 2018-2019 financial report, insurance form and bank statements (see below). Forms are available on the QFHSA website at www.qfhsa.org and the QFHSA office can supply sample reports.

** NEW **

- Blanket food fundraiser insurance form – please fill out an insurance form listing all the Home and School food fundraising events. If grade 6 graduation activities are under the Home and School umbrella please add them to the list. NO DATES NEEDED!
- Bank statements – please send the QFHSA the

opening and closing month bank statements for the 2018-2019 school year i.e. August 2018 to July 2019.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, November 9th – QFHSA Fall Conference (Macdonald High School) and 75 th Anniversary Banquet (Ceilidh Room, Macdonald Campus)

FOCUS ON THE LOCALS

Publicize your Home and School’s achievements in the QFHSA NEWS. Send us photos of your events and a short summary. Share your successes!

Next deadline: **November 15 th , 2019**

Contact: Marlyn Brownrigg at
marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org

QFHSA Offering Short Term Contract

WE ARE LOOKING for an individual who might be available and/or interested in a short term contract to update and reformat our **Children’s Literacy Resource Guide**.

This resource guide was first developed in 2005 by Marion Daigle and Dorothy Nixon, members of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations. Researchers, academics, authors, publishers, consultants, literacy organizations, parent volunteers, teachers, principals, librarians, and community child-care workers had given generously of their time, talent and expertise in helping to bring this guide to fruition. Now it is almost 20 years old and needs to be updated and refreshed.

Here is a sample (next page) from the current Guide for reference (the guide has 120 pages of content). If the individual applying has a flare for graphic design, they may propose a new format. They may even wish to suggest and design some new pages.

Duration of the project: 6 months

Compensation: \$500/month

Location: Work from home, regular update reports required, updated sheets submitted as completed for review.

For more information, contact: Carol Meindl

carolmeindl@qfhsa.org or call: 514 481 5619



MEN OF CLASS

Parental Involvement

Children's Literacy Resource Guide



Wanted: More Volunteer Dads

It's become an article of faith among experts that parental involvement - either through Home and School Associations or more informally - is directly linked to children's school success. With moms, of course, this sort of participation, especially in the elementary grades, is hardly a new thing. Yet a growing number of dads are following suit due to a variety of social factors: the increasing ranks of the self-employed, flexible work hours and dual-income families, as well as a gradual erosion of the gender stereotype. In two-parent families, involvement of both parents in school is significantly associated with a greater likelihood of their children getting mostly A's, enjoying school and being less likely to repeat a grade.

Ways in which Dads can help out:

- ◆ Ask the Principal or the President of the Home and School Association where they need volunteers;
- ◆ In the classroom: In the lower grades most teachers welcome another set of hands for everything from helping out with snacks to tutoring math or reading;
- ◆ On field trips: chaperones and drivers are always needed;
- ◆ In the library: acting as 'reading role models': e.g. hockey dad for Hockey Day;
- ◆ Fundraising, networking, career days;
- ◆ Coaching sports teams, managers, drivers;
- ◆ Lunchtime and after-school programs: sports, chess, mentoring, tutoring;
- ◆ Leadership: Governing Board, Home and School Association;
- ◆ Playground reconstruction or landscaping and gardening;
- ◆ School websites and newsletters;
- ◆ Mentoring at the high school level; for example, helping to organize company tours.

Adapted and abridged from John Lorinc's, *Men of Class*, Today's Parent magazine. June 2002. Read the entire article at www.todaysparent.com. Reprinted with kind permission of the author.

Fall Conference 2019: A History of Achievement

TO HELP CELEBRATE the 75th anniversary of QFHSA, the 2019 Fall Conference will be held this year in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue at Macdonald High school, home of our longest running Home and school Association. (1919 -2019) Home and School has seen many changes to the education system over the years and we have managed to adapt. Our involvement with the school system pre-dates Governing Boards, PPOs and the Ministry of Education itself.

And now, in 2019, we will see the end of school boards, elected school board commissioners and our associations will need to adapt to the new environment. But what will that look like?

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Geoff Kelley, Chair, APPELE Quebec

We have invited Geoff Kelley, Chair of the Alliance for the Promotion of English Public Education in Quebec (APPELE Quebec) to be Keynote Speaker and guide us through the new system of school service centers and what they will likely mean for our community.

WORKSHOPS:

Session #1: APPLYING FOR NOT FOR PROFIT STATUS FOR HOME AND SCHOOLS: Often times, opportunities arise for Home and Schools to partner with other organizations to realize a project. Everything looks good and then it is revealed that a not for profit organization can only donate to another not for profit or charitable organization. Although H&Ss function as NFP in many ways, without that official incorporation, they are not eligible to receive that funding. So, what would it take to incorporate and register as a not for profit? The Centre for Community Organizations will speak to us about the

pros and cons and logistics of Home and Schools Incorporating as a not for profit organization.

Session # 2: MIGRATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ONLINE: Technology is moving fast and Home and Schools struggle to keep up. More and more of our parent members prefer dealing with on-line transactions rather than writing cheques. Can a Home and School ditch the paper and go completely on-line? What are the benefits and what are the risks? What are some of the pitfalls, and best practices? Profit from the experiences of other Home and Schools, as we assemble a panel of individuals with first-hand experience navigating their H&S association through this brave new world.

HEALTHY SLEEP: ARE TODAY'S KIDS GETTING ENOUGH? Parents have hectic busy lives, and so do children these days, what role do hormones, technology and sleep patterns play? What are the consequences, how will it affect their health and what can we do about it.? Tracy Braunstein of Sleep Tight Solutions will tell us some of the latest research and offer concrete tips on how to be sure our children are getting the sleep they need.

Back by popular demand are our **REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS**, an opportunity for Home and School members to hear from each other about activities, projects and concerns at the local level. Benefit from the combined wisdom of other experienced Home and Schoolers and find solutions to some of your own challenges.

To register for Fall Conference/Banquet, contact the office@qfhsa.org or download the registration from www.qfhsa.org (under the forms tab)



QFHSA and Membership Association Liability Insurance Coverage with BFL

EVERY YEAR, QFHSA renews the Directors and Officers Liability Insurance Policy on the first of December. This policy covers the QFHSA Board of Directors and extends liability coverage to the Executive members of our member associations. However, member associations must **be in good standing** in order to qualify. BFL, in consultation with the Board of Directors, has determined "in good standing" to mean the seven main administration documents have been received by the QFHSA office including the first membership fee payment. (now \$20 per family)

These documents are:

- ⇒ **Executive Committee List** with names and complete contact information (all members of the Executive must be full paid members of their association)
- ⇒ **Administration Fee Form** accompanied by a \$50 payment
- ⇒ **1st Home and School Membership list** (including full mailing address and email address)
- ⇒ **Member Association Renewal Form** (signed by the

President, Treasurer and Membership Chair)

- ⇒ **Membership Summary form** indicating how many students are registered in your school and how many families.
- ⇒ **Treasurers 2018-19 Financial Report** for the end of the last fiscal year
- ⇒ **President's 2018-2019 Activity Report,**

All these documents can be found on the QFHSA website under *forms*. By December 1, we must submit to the Insurance company all the names of the schools "in good standing" to be included in the blanket coverage. We recommend that if you have not prepared these documents at your September meeting, that you put it as an item on your October or November meeting's agenda. While you have your executive around the table, have them fill out the information and sign where indicated. Then send it into the Provincial office. We do not expect you to have ALL of your potential membership signed up by November 15, but we ask that you send us the names and fees that you have collected to that date.

Building Bridges

"Be present. Be engaged. Be constructive"

- Dr. Victor Goldbloom,

THE LATE DR. VICTOR GOLDBLOOM once said, "I look around the world today and I see people fighting each other and pulling apart from one another because of religious or linguistic or ethnic or cultural differences, and I thank God for Canada."

The *Building Bridges* Youth Contest encourages Montreal area youth to showcase their artistic and writing talents to share their thoughts/experiences on how our community looks when we are working and living in harmony.

Presented by The Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, in collaboration with CIJA Quebec and The City of Montreal, this competition invites youth to submit creative writing or artwork, exploring aspects of building bridges across language, cultural or religious divides.

The contest is in memory of the late Dr. Victor Gold-

bloom, one of Montreal's finest statesmen, a great leader in intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and a citizen passionate about building bridges. His autobiography, *Building Bridges*, lays the foundation for this contest.

The *Building Bridges* contest is open to students from age 9 to 17, divided into three categories according to their grade in school (Elementary 4 to Secondary V). Prizes from \$100 to \$500 will be awarded to the winners ([see rules](#)).

Contestants may submit works in the form of creative writing, (poetry, story, prose, essay) or artwork (drawing, painting, song, photography, film, or multimedia). See contest rules for more details. The contest is open until **January 31, 2020**.

The top submissions will be selected by a panel of local judges and will be honoured at an event held at City Hall in February. The date of this awards ceremony will be announced shortly. Winning submissions will be shared via social media.

ANNIVERSARY BANQUET NOVEMBER 9, 2019

THIS YEAR WE CELEBRATE 75 years of parental involvement in education. Along with the Fall Conference, on November 9th, QFHSA is planning a celebration banquet to be held in the Ceilidh Room on the Macdonald College Campus in Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue.

We have asked four distinguished guests to offer their perspective on the legacy of Home and School through their own unique experiences.

Leo La France, who was a teacher at Lindsay Place and Beaconsfield High schools, Principal at Ecole Primaire Harwood (1988-1994) and at Ecole Primaire Pointe-Claire, (1994-1995) all with strong Home and Schools. His familiarization with Home and School activity continued as he served on the Lester B. Pearson School Board as Director General and later as Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, Leisure and Sport. Leo faithfully attended QFHSA Annual General Meetings and Fall Conferences every year, as a steadfast supporter of Home and School.

Kathrine Le Maistre, Chair of Advisory Board on English Education, also has roots in Home and School, being a member of the Edgewater H & S between 1984 and 1991 and started a school newsletter cleverly called *Edgewise*. She has been a professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University since 1987.

Rod MacLeod, author of *A Meeting of the People*, a study of the history of Protestant education in Quebec was familiar with the Elizabeth Ballantyne H&S when his children attended that school. Rod had also begun writing the history of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations in 2001, which is still considered an ongoing project we hope to complete someday.

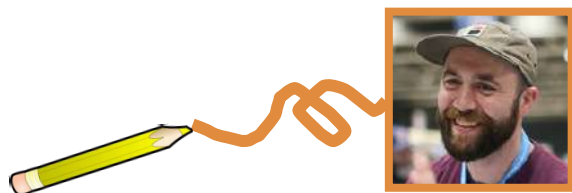
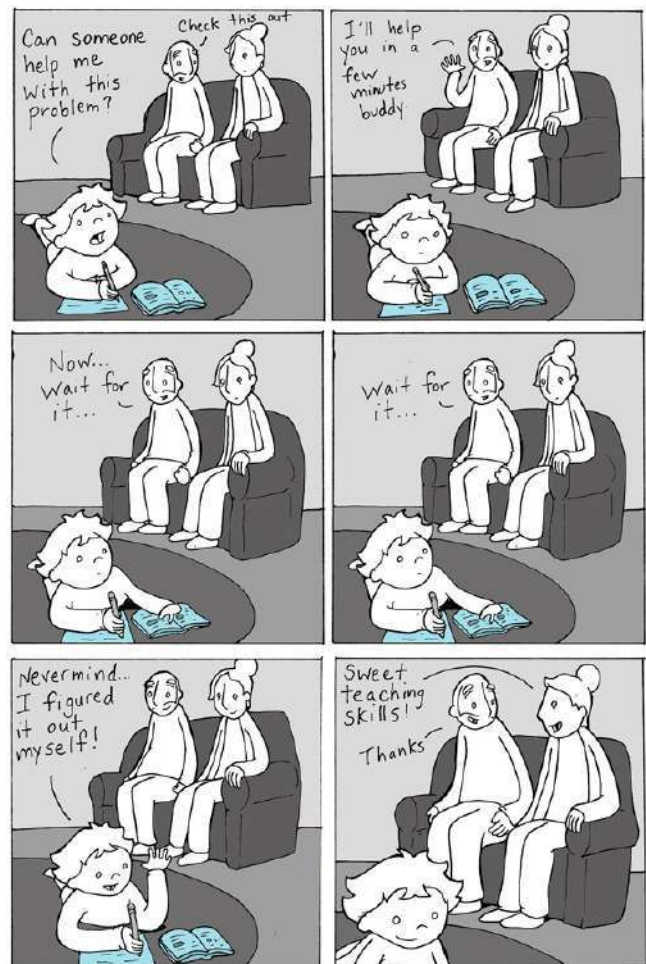
Casey Stillwell, a former member of Edgewater and John Rennie Home and School Associations has been invited to speak as former President of the Macdonald High School Home and School Association, one of longest running H&S associations in the Quebec Federation. Casey will share

some of her H&S experiences, as someone who had been passed the torch of leadership from a long line of over 30 different presidents at Macdonald High since the early 1900s.

As mentioned, a few of our H&S associations who joined the Federation in 1944 are still very active today. QFHSA will be making special presentations to **Macdonald High, Willingdon Elementary, Roslyn Elementary and Royal Vale Elementary**, as we recognize our four longest running Home and School Associations in Quebec, over 75 years!

Acknowledgement goes to the Secretariat Responsible for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers (SRQEA) for granting us financial support for this special anniversary celebration.

The Anniversary Banquet will be held in CEILIDH ROOM, Macdonald College Campus, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC



Christopher Grady is the creator of Lunarbaboon, a webcomic designed for humans. In his spare time he is a family man and an elementary school teacher in Toronto.

The Evolution of an Elementary School Garden

THE EDINBURGH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GARDEN has been growing for a number of years, with help from volunteer parents and teachers, as well as support from the school administration. The outdoor space consists of seven raised cedar beds in the school's side yard (as of this summer, they are watered by soaker hoses on timers), as well as many ornamental gardens. In addition, we have an indoor classroom growing space and now an "OGarden" (see more on this below). A parent volunteer, together with a teacher, organizes a garden club each year - typically we accept 10-15 students per spring – a small size helps ensure hands on experiences for each child. In spring of 2019, we had a total of 30 students participate in the school garden club (two cohorts, from grades 3-6), with many other kids enjoying the benefits of the raised garden boxes in the school side yard.

Here are some of the highlights of the spring 2019 garden program:

Intergenerational Planting Activity: For the last two years, members of our garden club have gone to the nearby Alzheimer's Groupe Inc (AGI) to plant seedlings with seniors in their day program. Prior to the visit, a representative from AGI visits the garden club students at the school to talk about dementia, and what they can expect from their visit to the AGI. On the day of the visit, 2-3 students are assigned to a table with 2-3 seniors, a facilitator and a school teacher or parent volunteer. They start by having a discussion where everyone around the table gets to know each other. Then, the planting begins! By the end of the morning 150 vegetable seedlings have been planted, which are then taken back to the school to be cared for by students until the seedlings are big enough to be sold at our annual spring fair or planted in our gardens. The exchanges that unfold between the seniors and students are truly magical.

Botanical Drawing Session: A parent volunteer who is also a scientific artist did a session with our garden club students on how to draw plants. The students were incredibly absorbed in measuring,

labelling and drawing their chosen seedlings, and they produced some incredibly detailed and diverse drawings which they then coloured with watercolours or coloured pencils.

OGarden: With generous funding from the Edinburgh Home and School Association, we purchased an OGarden, a made in Quebec "ferris wheel of plants" that is an indoor system for growing edible plants. Within a couple of months we had an array of tasty lettuces, Asian greens and herbs, which were enjoyed by the garden club in a special end of year salad in the garden.

McGill Seed Library: The Edinburgh garden club received a donation of heirloom seeds from the McGill University Seed Library. The garden club talked about the importance of saving seeds and heirloom varieties, and will be donating collected seeds back to the seed library in the fall.

Produce Donation to The Depot: Early produce from our garden – including spinach, lettuce and radishes – were donated to The Depot in NDG for use in their community restaurant.

Planting Heirloom Potatoes: This year for the first time our garden club planted heirloom potatoes in large burlap bags. They have grown vigorously all summer and we hope to dig them up and sell them at our Welcome Back BBQ in the fall, along with other produce that we harvest.

If you are thinking of starting a school garden or looking to branch out in your school garden activities, feel free to contact Joanna.duy@gmail.com for more information.

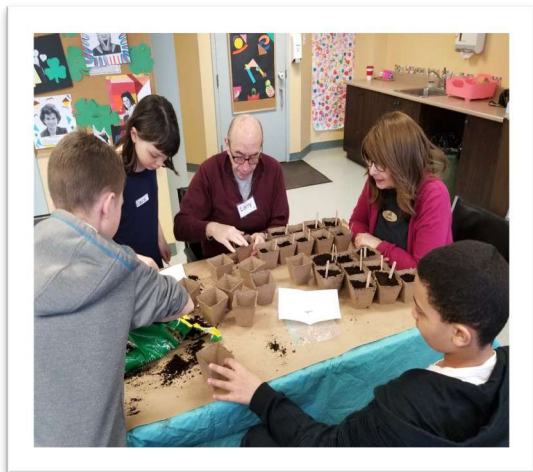




Above: Garden Club members sell seedlings at the school's Spring Fair and offer free salad samplings from the OGarden



Above: Grade 4 and 5 garden club students and teacher volunteer Noor Affana enjoying salad – cut, washed and prepared by the students - on the last day of garden club



Above: Planting seedlings at the Alzheimer's Group (AGI)



Above: Grade 3 and 6 garden club members drawing cucamelon seedlings in the botanical illustration session



Above: Grade 4 and 5 garden club members caring for spinach and lettuces

FROM THE ARCHIVES: "What is Home & School - and Where is it Going?"

EVEN IN 1963, Home and School was trying to hold a steady course and stay true to its original intentions, only 19 years after the fFederation's formation. Much of what you will read in this excerpt taken from the minutes of a Board of Directors meeting remains relevant today when we consider why we do what we do and what is the purpose of a Home and School...

MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of the Council of Representatives held May 10-11, 1963 at Sir George Williams University, 1435 Drummond Street, Montreal.

PRESENT: 325 delegates, representing 108 local associations

The meeting opened with the playing of "God Save the Queen and "O Canada".

The Chairman, Mr. Wolfe Rosenbaum, President, declared the 19th Annual Meeting in session. He then read the invocation. Mr. Rosenbaum welcomed the delegates and introduced Mr. Harold Young, Inspector General of the Department of Education....

(After the adoption of minutes and several resolutions admitting new Home and School Associations into the Federation, the meeting continued)

Mr. Rosenbaum then introduced Mr. A. R. Hasley, who addressed the delegates on "What is Home & School - and Where is it Going?"

Mr. Hasley outlined the National aspect of the Home and School movement when 50 years ago there was practically no liaison between parents and educators and the whole aim of school boards was to obtain the cheapest teachers and to house them and the children in as poorly equipped and inexpensive school buildings as possible. Home and School, working with other groups, had done much to bring about a very different atmosphere.

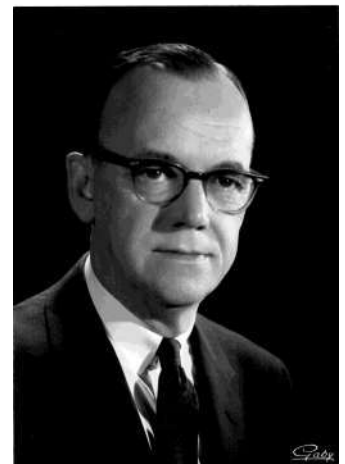
Home and School had been the originators and instigators of the two Canadian Conferences on Education and the Canadian Conference on Children. Home and School had been consulted by a number of National bodies on various aspects of child life. Mr. Hasley then went on to some self-criticism of Home and School and its "sins" -the first being grasping for size often at the expense of quality, the second as attempting to entertain the membership with their programs rather than contribute constructively to improving abilities as teachers and parents.

The wasting of time on non-essentials is a crime of which many associations and federations are guilty. The lack of understanding of the availability of good material to further parental education is the most serious of all the criticisms. Fear of tackling the difficult issues - in fact sidestepping programs of this type because they would not "draw" a sizeable attendance. Mr. Hasley suggested that except when we talk to other Home and Schoolers we rarely mention Home and School. If we, even as a provincial federation, were to undertake to ask our 20,000 family members to agree to mention Home and School to our friends on one occasion per week and also to bring some phase of education into our social or business conversation at least twice a week, we could create a stir of public opinion of amazing magnitude.

Our aims for the future should be better programmes of an informative nature, better communications within our membership, better informed parents and teachers. The best way we could influence public opinion is the establishment of a sound public relations programme at all levels of Home and School and this did not mean just publicity, but a conscious effort to have worthy aims and objectives, to conduct sound programmes to the end that we be better informed on educational matters and see that we are known in our communities as good citizens through our participation in Home and School activities.

Home and School offers a challenge which we can only ignore at the risk of denying our children their birthright.

In 1959, A.R. Hasley had become the Chair of the Education Committee and launched Operation Bootstraps, QFH-SA's most ambitious study ever on the need for education reform in Quebec. The resulting 45,000-word brief contained 176 recommendations and was presented to the Parent Commission in 1962. It was praised for its outstanding coherence and insight. One of the Commission's recommendations that was echoed in the brief was the setting up of a Department of Education (Bill 60, 1964)



Alex R Hasley

Executive Workshops 2019 (MONTREAL) Oct 1, 2019

ON OCTOBER 1ST, the QFHSA Directors and Staff offered an evening of information for Home and School executive members new to their positions. Many parents had questions about the responsibilities of their positions and the obligations of their executive overall. The 32 Home and School parents who attended the evening, representing 13 local associations, were first welcomed by Executive Director Carol Meindl, and Executive Vice-President Rosemary Murphy. Many executives had spoken on the phone with QFHSA staff in the past, but were happy to finally meet face-to-face, Marlyn Brownrigg, our Membership Services Coordinator and Mimi Tabaczuk, our Administrative Assistant.

The parents were brought up to speed on such topics as Fall Conference and the 75th Anniversary Banquet to be held in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue on November 9, 2019; the *No to Loi 21* button campaign; QFHSA Facebook page/QFHSA Facebook Think Tank Forum and the "Building Bridges" essay contest hosted by the Christian Jewish Dialogue of Montreal. Marlyn and Mimi gave the parents more information on the "Blanket Insurance coverage for food item sales" and Carol Meindl reminded everyone that the QFHSA's "A History of Achievement" exhibition banners were available for loan to member associations for campaign purposes this fall.

Before the parents broke out into their separate groups, Karen Delage, Family Life Educator, was given a few minutes to introduce herself and give a short description of the sort of parenting workshops she offers. The overall goal of her workshops is to give parents the tools they need to help navigate the child-to-adolescent-to-teen wonder/horror years and realize they are not alone with their struggles. Karen will be hosting the first of a series of three free workshops at the QFHSA offices on October 23rd **"Who are you and what have you done with my Child!"** Space will be limited so RSVP as soon as registration opens. The QFHSA is sponsoring the cost of this event.

The executives then broke into their separate groups: Presidents, Treasurers and Membership/Communications, each with their own Toolkit prepared by the office. Marlyn Brownrigg and Rosemary Murphy lead the President's Workshop; Mimi Tabaczuk lead the Treasurer's Workshop and Carol Meindl lead the Membership/Communications Workshop.

Topics addressed with the Presidents by Marlyn and Rosemary included documentation and reports required by the QFHSA, creating agendas, running a meeting, the importance of updated constitution and bylaws and many more topics.

Meanwhile, Mimi and the Treasurers were discussing financial report preparation, signing authorities, e-transfers, financial transparency and many other topics. Home and Schools are at different levels when it comes to their online presence.

In the next room, Carol Meindl was leading her group through the Membership Chair Toolkit. She mentioned the importance of being familiar with the Home and School mission statement, navigated them through the general timeline for Home and School Associations, indicated the importance of the reports that H&Ss must submit to the provincial office, the general duties of a Membership Chair and a few tips on how to plan a membership campaign and keep track of paid members. Participants were reminded to add the up-coming Fall Conference and Anniversary Banquet on the H&S meeting agenda in October and information was offered on the distribution mechanics of the QFHSA NEWS magazine. Executives had an opportunity to ask questions and were able to answer some of them amongst themselves, sharing information.

Executive Workshops are held every fall at the QFHSA offices for the Montreal area Home and School associations as well as at Fall Conference (usually bi-yearly). An additional Executive Workshop will be offered to schools in the Gatineau area later in the year. Executive Tool kits are available from the office.

Thank you once again to this year's Executive workshop participants who braved the record-breaking rainfall to attend this year's training session.

"We learned so much and feel we finally have some kind of framework and direction to lead our H&S. It was awesome to be able to network with other schools as well and get some great ideas. I can't thank you enough for this training, it was exactly what we needed!- Mountainview Home and School, Deux-Montagne, QC

QFHSA supports Coalition Inclusion Quebec

MEMBERS OF COALITION INCLUSION QUEBEC met on September 25th at the Unitarian Church in Westmount to receive an update on the court challenges being brought forward by their Legal Committee against this discriminatory law in order to uphold the rights of three female teachers. They intend to demonstrate to the court that the law is incoherent, unconstitutional and invalid.

According to their press release of September 27th, 2019, the principal legal arguments of the Coalition Inclusion Quebec are as follows

- *Law 21 declares that “laicity” rests on several basic rights and freedoms, including equality and freedom of religion, while simultaneously asserting that laicity requires banning the wearing of religious symbols by teachers and other public sector employees. It is Orwellian to declare that equality and freedom of religion include, and even require, banning a religious practice. The Supreme Court has on numerous occasions established that freedom of religion includes the freedom to practise and that the right to equality includes the right not to be discriminated against based on religious affiliation. We are arguing that laicity cannot be defined to give it a meaning that condones discrimination and the repression of freedom of religion.*
- *Freedom of religious practice in Quebec and Canada dates back to the Act of Quebec of 1774 when the British Parliament granted French-speaking Catholics living in what is now Quebec the right to practise their religion and to hold office without swearing an oath that would contradict their religious beliefs. Early on, freedom of religious practice was acknowledged for Quebecers of other faiths and became a fundamental constitutional principle long before the Quebec or Canadian Charters, a principle which operates independently of the notwithstanding clauses.*
- *Law 21 is not a mere dress code for public employees. In its essence, it is about enshrining a state preference for the absence of religion as a fundamental constitutional norm in Quebec. That is a matter outside provincial jurisdiction. Quebec is simply not constitutionally competent to enact this law.*
- *Thanks to the sustained efforts of women’s groups and others in the 1980s, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms specifically protects gender equality, guaranteeing that all Charter rights will be protected equally for*

men and women. In the early drafts of the Canadian Charter, this right, like the right to freedom of religion and freedom from discrimination, was to be subject to the notwithstanding clause, allowing it to be overridden by a legislature. In the face of massive objections, the Trudeau government backed down and, today, this right is not subject to the notwithstanding clause.

- *There is little doubt that the target of Law 21 is hijab-wearing women, and, as the numerous cases of female teachers losing their jobs or being refused a job suggest, the effect of the law is disproportionately felt by women. Premier Legault had made it clear that his future government would target religious symbols that subjugate (“asservissent”) les femmes. In other words, his own cultural perception was that certain Muslim religious symbols subjugated women and therefore the future law would target these.*
- *Over the coming months and years, we expect that opposition to Law 21 will continue to take many forms, and the CIQ is committed to continuing to collaborate with like-minded Quebecers in appropriate initiatives. But we also believe the courts have a critical role to play in preserving the framework for the inclusive society we want to build together.*

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations supported the Coalition Inclusion Quebec, in the “Non a La Loi 21” Button Campaign throughout September, in response to our Statement adopted at the May 4 Annual General Meeting where we called for the withdrawal of Bill 21, subsequently passed into law. QFHSA intends to continue our opposition to this law through our support for the Coalition’s legal efforts to reverse this law.



Climate March 2019—How Dare You!



ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2019, 500,000 children, youth, adults, and seniors marched down Parc Avenue from the Georges-Étienne Cartier statue in Mount-Royal Park, around the downtown city streets of Montreal and gathered again at Parc Bonaventure. They were all there to make a statement: Time is up. We MUST ACT on climate change or it will be too late for all of us. It will be the beginning of the end.

This was the largest demonstration of its kind in the history of Montreal and was inspired by the young Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg, a 16-year old girl with a mission. As she so eloquently put it in her speech to the United Nations leaders on September 23rd, probably one of the most important speeches of the 21st century:

"My message is that we'll be watching you.

This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you.

You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!

For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you're doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.

You say you hear us and that you understand the urgency. But no matter how sad and angry I am, I do not want to believe that. Because if you really understood the situation and still kept on failing to act, then you would be evil. And that I refuse to believe.

The popular idea of cutting our emissions in half in 10 years only gives us a 50% chance of staying below 1.5 degrees [Celsius], and the risk of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control.

Fifty percent may be acceptable to you. But those numbers do not include tipping points, most feedback loops, additional warming hidden by toxic air pollution or the aspects of equity and climate justice. They also rely on my generation

sucking hundreds of billions of tons of your CO2 out of the air with technologies that barely exist.

So a 50% risk is simply not acceptable to us — we who have to live with the consequences.

To have a 67% chance of staying below a 1.5 degrees global temperature rise — the best odds given by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] — the world had 420 gigatons of CO2 left to emit back on Jan. 1st, 2018. Today that figure is already down to less than 350 gigatons.

How dare you pretend that this can be solved with just 'business as usual' and some technical solutions? With today's emissions levels, that remaining CO2 budget will be entirely gone within less than 8 1/2 years.

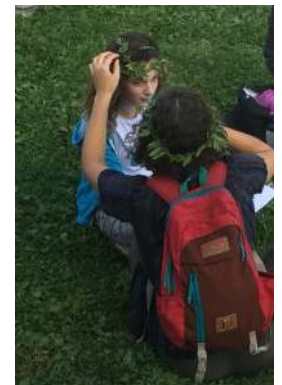
There will not be any solutions or plans presented in line with these figures here today, because these numbers are too uncomfortable. And you are still not mature enough to tell it like it is.

You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you.

We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now is where we draw the line.

The world is waking up. And change is coming, whether you like it or not."

Greta speaks for her generation when she accuses us with: "How dare you?"



How dare we indeed! How dare we look to our children and future grandchildren to lead long happy lives and feel we are providing for them just by putting food on the table, clean clothes on their back, a dry roof over their head and providing fulfilling activities to amuse them, when, at the same time, we drive around in our SUVs, heat our homes with oil, consume plastics and waste food and rob them of that same future? What are we giving to them now, that they will not see taken away from them and their children in the future, unless we make the necessary changes right here, right now, to save the planet?

Our children are looking to us. We cannot look away.



Christopher Grady is the creator of Lunarbaboon, a webcomic designed for humans. In his spare time he is a family man and an elementary school teacher in Toronto.



www.lunarbaboon.com

APPELE-Quebec dives into Bill 40

MEMBER OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE of APPELE Quebec (The Alliance for the Promotion of English Language Education in Quebec) gathered in Dorval on October 1st, to witness the tabling of the long anticipated school board restructuring legislation.

Minister of Education and Higher Education Jean-Francois Roberge tabled *Bill 40: An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance* in the National Assembly at 2pm. After Minister Roberge read his introduction to the Bill and as soon as the legislation had been posted to the National Assembly website, copies of the bill were being printed for the Steering Committee to go through, line by line.

As the *projet de loi* is just under 90 pages long, individual members were flagging various points for further research. It was clear that, with so many amendments being proposed to so many different acts and regulations (84 in total), a copy of the current Education Act with the amendments inserted, for context, would be required.

Members of the Steering Committee had sent letters to the Minister of Education and the leaders of the opposition parties requesting *consultations generale* be held, but it was clear at the tabling of the bill that *consultation particulaire* would be offered instead, much to the disappointment of the Alliance. Such wide-reaching legislation should have wide-reaching consultation.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, a member of the APPELE Steering Committee, will mandate the Rights, Education and Resolutions Committee to study Bill 40 and draft a statement highlighting areas that could be modified to better serve the community and keep in line with the Minister's original objective, which is the put more of the decision making power into the hands of parents.

Focus on



The locals

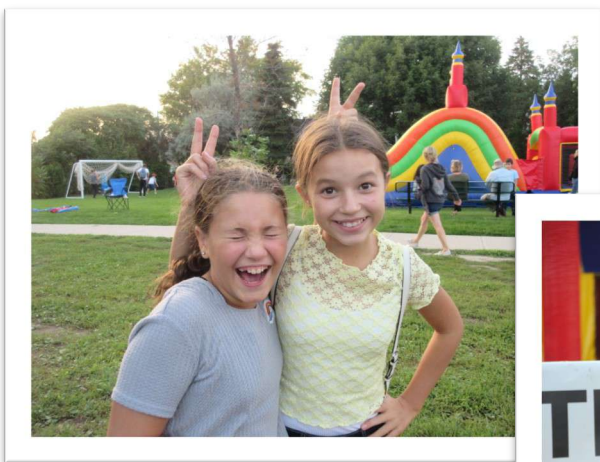
Saint Patrick's

THIS YEAR AT ST. PAT'S, we tried out a new way of welcoming back our families and staff for the 2019-2020 school year, a Carnival! From bounce castles, open-air karate, and fitness sessions, to popcorn, cotton candy, and shaved-ice stations, our St. Pat's family community celebrated coming together for our school's reopening.

We were fortunate to have had 5 brave teachers volunteer for our dunk tank, and proceeds were donated to

their classrooms for supplies! The Pincourt Fire Station came to show their community spirit and our kids had a blast scaling the fire truck and keeping the fireman busy with their many questions.

Our H&S was proud of the amazing volunteers that came out in force to lend a hand in every way to make this day as memorable as it was. Here's to another great Shamrockin' year st St. Pat's!





WHERE IS MY SCHOOL?

Disappointed that your school is not in the Focus on the Locals section? Please talk to your Home and School members and submit the wonderful things your association is doing to news@qfhsa.org for our next issue in November 2019.



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