

Letters

DEAR PARENTS,

School registration time is upon us once again. This is a very important time for our schools. Although final numbers are not calculated until the end of September, early registration numbers are used to plan the resources needed for the school year to come.

As Governing Board Chair of Mansonville Elementary School I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to see what our school has to offer. We are a small school, which tries to offer each student a plan to suit his/her individual needs. We offer amazing programs, such as swimming for all students, skiing for grades 3-6, as well as many other nature-centered and educational fieldtrips and outings. We also have a very hard working PPO that works hard to ensure that the cost of all these activities is kept to a minimum so that all the children are able to take part.

Many people don't know if their child is eligible for English school; if you are not sure please inform yourself because these rights have an expiry date. Don't lose them. Did you know that if your child does not do the majority of their elementary schooling in the English system their rights are gone?

Our school understands and embraces the importance of French and I believe we have the best French second language teacher there is (yes I am biased). Our team of teachers is engaged and ready to develop a life-long love of learning in our students

I would invite you to come and take a fresh look at our school and all that we have to offer your child. Speak to a parent, visit with our principal and meet our teachers. You will see that Mansonville School is a thriving, child-centered, stimulating environment that will embrace your child like an extended family. We are ready to grow - but to do that - we need you!

To make an appointment or for more information please contact the school at 450-292-5622. Also feel free to check us out at <http://mansonville.ctsb.qc.ca/> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MansonvilleElementarySchool/>

Thank you

SHAWN JERSEY
MANSONVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR

THE RECORD, FEB. 13, 2017

The Starboard Journal, Feb 15, 2017

Launch of Hooked on School Days – Superheroes wanted

The Table estrienne de concertation interordres en éducation (TECIÉ) and Partners for Educational Success Estrie (Projet PRÉE) are pleased to launch the 8th edition of Hooked on School Days (HSD) in the lobby of the Alfred-Desrochers room at the Cégep de Sherbrooke. Five days for a major provincial and regional mobilization campaign for educational success and school perseverance in Quebec. This event is taking place from February 13th to 17th 2017 and represents an opportunity to mobilize the entire Estrie community.

Staying in school is everyone's business!

The launch of HSD, which brought together more than 50 actors from various organizations and sectors at the Cégep de Sherbrooke, was an opportunity to highlight the positive contributions of school perseverance superheroes by putting a face to their involvement. Those present were lucky enough to witness the performance

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photo courtesy



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of a young slammer, William Longpré, who delivered a unifying text conveying that school perseverance is the entire community's business. "Together, we can all make a difference on the educational success of our young people. The commitment of everyone is the key to success. We must make the educational success of our youth a value that is borne by our entire community! Because school perseverance is not a matter of a week... perseverance is the business of a lifetime. Every bit helps," highlights Mrs. Marie-France Bélanger, co-president of the TECIÉ and the Projet PRÉE. As part of this mobilization movement, Mr. Bertrand Lamoureux, mayor of the town of Coaticook, and Mr. André Gravel, Fiber Manager at Domtar, both school perseverance superheroes, each came to deliver a message aimed at mobilizing the actors of the municipal sector and the business world around school perseverance. Following the same idea, some twenty video clips presenting school perseverance superheroes were launched this morning. Video clips are available at jpsestrie.ca.

Nomination of school perseverance superheroes: the challenge is on!

Hashtag: #JPS2017

Everyone knows someone who has made a difference in his or her education or in that of a young person: an elected official who contributed to the implementation of a project that promotes school perseverance, an employer that encourages the school-work balance of his student employees, a teacher, professional or school principal who supports student success through their day-to-day involvement, an early childhood educator that reads stories to children every day, parents who support their child every day, a community organization worker that offers their full support

to a young person during their school career, etc. And we must not forget the students themselves who, through their efforts and accomplishments, are the first heroes of school perseverance!

"We all know a superhero. During HSD, we invite the entire Estrie population to share their school perseverance superheroes' stories on social media by using the hashtag #JPS2017. People are encouraged to make short videos of their superhero's nomination. We want to create a veritable tidal wave of school perseverance superheroes across the entire province of Quebec," explains **Josiane Bergeron**, coordinator of the Projet PRÉE. Two information sheets were created to promote the nomination of superheroes; one explaining how to proceed with the nomination of a superhero and the other giving all the tools needed to create a simple video clip.

Review: 10 years of efforts have paid off

The Projet PRÉE's mission is to promote the school perseverance and educational success of young Estriens through the mobilization of inter-order and inter-sectoral actors and through the development of joint initiatives. For over 10 years now, the Projet PRÉE has worked with Estrie's local driving forces to increase the qualification and graduation rate of young Estriens. The commitment of all members of the community has resulted in our efforts paying off. The graduation and qualification rate of young Estriens has increased significantly in recent years, going from 65.2% in 2003 to 73% in 2015. For more information, consult the report: 2006-2016 School Perseverance in Estrie...10 years of mobilization! which presents the actions implemented during the last 10 years in Estrie.

EDUCATION ANALYSIS

Talk radio puts school board to the test

Freedom-of-speech criticism overlooks obvious intolerance

By Scott Stevenson

The debate in Quebec City this month over radio content on school buses in the wake of the mosque shooting speaks more about racism and xenophobia in Quebec than it does about freedom of speech.

The Commission scolaire de la Capitale initially told school bus drivers not to play controversial talk radio on its buses while transporting many of the 28,000 students to 60 schools under the board's management. The school board had received a complaint from a parent about the talk radio content, which had already been the subject of debate and criticism for promoting xenophobia prior to Quebec City's mosque shooting.

Then the radio show hosts, a Coalition avenir Québec politician, and the Quebec Education Minister spoke against the school board's decision, calling it censorship.

The school board responded by backtracking, revising its initial orders to school bus drivers into a request to be "vigilant." It subsequently refused to speak publicly about its decisions.

Other restrictions not criticized

Parents, teachers, education leaders, and policy makers are always choosing what is appropriate and not appropriate for students to read, hear, or watch. We do it in relation to books, magazines, the Internet, movies, and even curriculum—the content of what is taught every day in subjects like English, French, and History.

If this is "censorship," it is usually done with care and reason, taking into account the lack of knowledge and critical skills in children and youth. The vot-

ing age is 18 because youth are generally not yet ready or fully capable of judging for themselves what is best for them and others. Outside the home, we expect those who are responsible for our children to use judgment in what they allow young people to read, hear, and see, and in interpreting it.

CBC Radio's All in a Weekend played a clip last Sunday of an interview with popular musician Webster by Quebec City talk show host Jeff Fillion in which Fillion admonishes Webster about how immigrants are very privileged in Quebec.

It seems Fillion was upset that Webster was organizing an anti-racism festival (which starts in Quebec City today), and he described Webster as "you immigrants"—even though Webster is not an immigrant. He is part of a visible minority, though, and was the subject of a racial slur on the streets of Quebec City only months earlier, prompting him to organize the festival.

Nor do immigrants have it any better in Quebec than non-immigrants; in fact, they would usually "have it" more challenging, particularly refugees—even before facing so much fear of the other in our society.

Children who hear the kind of interview conducted by Jeff Fillion don't always have the knowledge or critical skills to understand the intolerance he and other such radio hosts express. They may come away from hearing such talk with the notion that "immigrants" are more privileged than they deserve, both from Fillion's words and tone.

As Webster points out, they would also be encouraged to think in terms of us versus them. "It's you, the black peo-

ple, you, the immigrants and us — meaning white people. This [festival] is against that view of society," he told CBC Radio.

It is certainly within a school board's rights and responsibilities to censor the Fillion kind of talk that leads to such views.

Equally important, if there are children and parents who feel they are being targeted hurtfully by the words or actions of social leaders and other authorities, institutions such as school boards have an obligation to take their concerns seriously, to represent them, and to protect them.

My son reports that the school buses he's been on within the Eastern Townships School Board play either nothing or music and that you can't hear anyway over the din of student voices and excitement.

That doesn't mean a school board can avoid having a sensitive and fair policy on content, however, just as schools do the same every day in their classrooms, libraries, and theatres.

More than ever, such policies must show respect and openness to people of different backgrounds and religions, such as the Muslims who are now suffering so much fear and hatred in Quebec and beyond.

