

# Dunham family worry about teacher's future after boy says he was slapped

CTV Montreal

Published Monday, November 7, 2016 7:52PM EST

A family in Dunham says they feel let down by their school system after their 11-year-old son says he was slapped by his gym teacher.

The teacher was suspended for three months, but is scheduled to return to work next week.

Wyatt Patch, a student at Heroes' Memorial Elementary School in Cowansville, said he was arguing with a classmate last June in the hallway when his gym teacher walked over and slapped him.

"He hit me directly around the eye on my face," he said. "My eye was swollen and red and I had tears coming down."

## PHOTOS



Wyatt Patch

His mother Julie Perkins called the incident "very upsetting."

"Very much so," she said. "You send your kids to school and think they're going to be safe, they're going to be taken care of. Three hours after it happened and you still see a red mark across his face."

The incident between Wyatt and teacher Jean Benoit was apparently witnessed by dozens of students, including fellow student Jade Gaudreau.

"He went up to Wyatt and slapped him in the face, and after, he said, 'How did you like that?'" she said.

The Eastern Townships School Board suspended Benoit for three months.

Wyatt's mother started a Facebook page called [Teacher Alert](#), where other parents added their own concerns about the longtime gym teacher — primarily how he spoke to children.

"He would swear at our class and call us names," said Wyatt's sister, Kaylah Patch.

Neither Benoit nor the teachers' union responded to CTV Montreal's calls.

Two weeks ago, parents received a letter saying Benoit would be returning to work Nov. 14.

Wyatt and his family said they couldn't believe it.

"If he had enough courage to smack me, he could smack someone else or my brothers," he said.

Eastern Townships School Board Chairperson Michael Murray said some questions remain.

"The incident is not contested as such; the severity of the incident is the only thing that is being debated," he said, adding that they conducted their own investigation and didn't believe firing Benoit was warranted.

"It was a blow that could have been accidental, or could have been the result of deliberation. It could have been momentary lapse of judgment. It could have been many, many things. It is not grounds for ending the career of a human being who has committed a quarter of a century to education," said Murray.

The board, however, decided Monday that Benoit would not be returning to Heroes' Memorial.

"He should know better and if he's going to act like that, he shouldn't be teaching," said Perkins.

The board has yet to say what Benoit's role at another school will be.

CTV News, Nov 7, 2016

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Article rank | 8 Nov 2016 | Sherbrooke Record | By Louise Smith

# Home Base at Massey-vanier – a safe place

Home Base opened in 2009 and it has been expanding ever since. It now encompasses three classroom spaces. Forty-four students are associated with Home Base and on average, five to seven new students are added every year. Many of their students are on the autism spectrum but not all. Some are on the language disorder spectrum.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOUISE SMITH

**Captions: Get Attachment: The Home Base family. Back row: Jacqui Swennen, Bernard Messier, Carolyn Reynolds, Karen Crandall. Front row: Pauline Sornberger, Karen Ferraz, Kelli Hackett.**

There is always someone on duty in Home Base with two or three technicians following student groups in the classrooms. Most of the students are able to go to class and they are all encouraged to participate in physical education classes and in school activities like the RC Club, Carnival, Spirit Day, and field trips. The goal is inclusion wherever possible.

Home Base is a safe place. It is a fluid model of service that provides support when needed. It is committed to providing a safe environment for each student. It promotes structure through visual schedules, assignment checklists, the development of organizational skills, and individualized hand-timetabled schedules. Small pullout groups from classrooms come to Home Base for academic help after instruction time in the regular classroom.

Within the room is a separate area known as the Blue Room. There is a bed and a weighted comfort sack and a large ball and a calming atmosphere where students can go when in crisis or needing time out by themselves.

Reynolds is the resource teacher attached to Home Base. She says that the entire staff deserves "gold stars." They are awesome, dedicated, and hard working, and they each go above and beyond what is expected of them. Bernard Messier, the psychoeducator, is also a support for the centre.

Preparation for these students happens before they even enter Masseyvanier. The feeder elementary school fills in a transition profile. The students are visited in their elementary schools in the spring and then they have a visit to Home Base and Massey-vanier before the end of the school year. They also come in early in August again. All this leads to a positive transition.

Many students connected to Home Base can stay in the day system until the age of 21 if they are on the autistic spectrum. It allows for academics to be spread over an extended time and successful completion of a high school diploma, where possible, is the goal.

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Article rank | 8 Nov 2016 | Sherbrooke Record | By Catherine Canzani, Principal

# Waterloo school gets their hands dirty

Waterloo School has been in the midst of their pottery-making program for the last few weeks. Students have been involved in this project for several years and have become excellent potters under the watchful eye of pottery teacher, Qita Reindler.



Students from grades 2 to 6 are involved in the program, and thanks to the generous donation of a kiln donated to us by Brian Herman, we are able to both glaze and fire our pottery right in our school. Students make a variety of projects such as bowls, cups, spoon rests, soap dishes and beautiful Christmas ornaments, which are both given as Christmas gifts to students' families as well as being sold at our Christmas concert to raise some funds to keep the program running.

Pottery making is an expensive program and selling our works alone would never generate enough income to keep the program running. Waterloo School is so blessed to receive generous donations from the Godbout Foundation as well as from the Waterloo School Trust Fund.

It is such a treat to watch our students so intent on their work. Everyone knows the routines and procedures and it is a very quiet workspace as students are focused on their works of art. Qita pulls up one student at a time and guides their hands through the process of creating on the potter's wheel. It's a sensitive process – one slight of hand and the project needs to be re-started. Other students sit at their tables working on their individual pieces with the help of our art teacher, Laura Teasdale.



We are looking forward to showcasing our students' creations at our up-coming Christmas Concert. Our pottery program is truly worth getting our hands dirty for.

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Article rank | 8 Nov 2016 | Sherbrooke Record | By Bob Halsall

# Pipers win Nicholas Gilkinson Hockey Tournament

The Alexander Galt Senior Boys hockey team got off to an exciting start by winning the Neil Gilkinson Hockey Tournament Friday afternoon in Cowansville for the 6th time in its 13year history.



VINCENT LEVESQUE ROUSSEAU

**Cookshire native Hugo Roy catches Rimouski goalie Charles-olivier Levesque out of position before scoring the OT winner Sunday, keeping the Phoenix's win streak alive.**

The tournament is in memory of Gilkinson who died 12 years ago. He was an outstanding athlete for the Vikings athletic program on the ice and soccer field. He was the teams top scorer and leader and had a passion for sports.

The Pipers defeated the host school 50 in the opening game of the tournament. Felix Antoine Dostie, Zack Vaillancourt and Justin Schoolcraft scored single markers while Sam Blais netted a pair in the victory. Thirteen-year-old rookie net minder Xavier Fisk stopped all 14 shots directed his way for the shut out.

The Pipers and Stanstead College Prep team skated to a 2-2 tie in their second game. Jeremy Gagnon opened the scoring for the Spartans in the second period. Blais converted on a nice passing play from Schoolcraft and Cedric Fauteux to even the score 5:13 in the third period. Zack Poulin put the Spartans back ahead with a power play marker two minutes later. Bryer Smith tied the game up with 2:50 remaining after taking a nice backhand saucer pass from Enrick Jutras Plante.

Rookie net minder Jordan Knapp kicked aside 22 of 24 shots to pick up the tie for the Pipers.

The Pipers faced off against the BCS Bears in their final game of the round robin tournament needing a win and not give up any goals to capture the trophy. Arbour and Smith gave the Pipers a quick 2-0 lead early in the contest. Dostie notched his second goal of the tournament thanks to a great

individual effort from Tremblay to get him the puck short handed. Arbour potted his second of the game late in the second period to give the Pipers a 4-0 lead.



Tremblay made it 5-0 with a nifty move on a break away mid way through the third period. However the Pipers ran into penalty trouble the rest of the game, but Fisk was up to the test by stopping all 20 shots and preserving his second shut out in as many games and the Gilkinson trophy for Galt.

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# Stanstead Journal

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Stanstead, Stanstead Townships, Stanstead East, Ogden, Ayer's Cliff, North Hatley, Hatley, Waterville, Georgeville, Magog, Lennoxville, Barnston, Derby Line

## 6<sup>th</sup> time for Galt



*Stanstead Journal, Nov. 9, 2014*

photo courtesy Alexandre Galt High School

The Alexander Galt Senior Boys hockey team who won the Neil Gilkinson Hockey Tournament for the 6<sup>th</sup> time in its 13-year history

### Bob Halsall, Special collaboration

The Alexander Galt Senior Boys hockey team got off to an exciting start by winning the Neil Gilkinson

Hockey Tournament Friday afternoon in Cowansville for the 6th time in its 13-year history.

*see Galt, page 15*



*from page 1*

## **Galt beats BCS in final**

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# Provencher and Burns Named Piper Athletes of the Month

**Bob Fisk**  
**Special collaboration**

**A**melie Provencher and Noah Burns of the Cross Country Running Team have been named Piper Athletes of the month for October.

Provencher won all three ETIAC races she competed in at the Senior Girls level this past month. The graduating student was instrumental in helping the Pipers win their 4th consecutive ETIAC running banner. The Sherbrooke native won the bronze medal at the regional meet held at College Mont St. Anne at the beginning of the month. As a result, the 16 year old qualified for the RSEQ provincial race and represented Estrie at Gand Mere and finished in 9th place. Provencher also has a strong work ethic in the classroom where sits on the Principal's List.

Burns missed the entire sports season last year with a severe accident that broke his leg in several spots. However the 13-year old showed tremendous determination and character to get back on the field with several hours of rehabilitation. Burns won three gold medals in as many ETIAC meets this past month. His story and presence helped inspire the rest of the team throughout the season. The grade eight student also excels in the classroom in which he sits on the Principals List as well. Next on Burns' to do list is the Bantam boys basketball team that he won't miss this year.



**Amelie Provencher**

photos courtesy Alexandre Galt Heigh School



**Noah Burns**

*Starboard Journal, Nov 9, 2016*

# THE RECORD

THE VOICE OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SINCE 1897

Article rank 9 Nov 2016 Sherbrooke Record By Matthew McCully

## Strong reaction to Heroes' teacher reinstatement after slapping incident

Last June, an 11-year-old Heroes' Memorial Elementary School student said he was slapped in the face by his gym teacher.

Following a police investigation as well as an internal inquiry within the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB), both of which concluded there was insufficient evidence to warrant prosecution or terminate the teacher's employment, a suspension sanction was imposed, and the teacher was then scheduled to return to work at Heroes' on Monday, Nov. 14.

When parents at the school were notified of the teacher's planned return, ETSB Chairman Mike Murray said there was a sense of outrage that the teacher could return to the school.

Ultimately, Murray confirmed yesterday the teacher will not return to Heroes' Memorial, but would not comment where or in what capacity the teacher would continue his employment with the board.

Murray said the investigation "reached a point where it was clear this was not an offense that warrants ending a person's career. Other than that, I don't care to comment."

Murray did, however, share his disappointment that no one had confidence in the school or the council of commissioners to do the right thing in this situation.

A Facebook page called Teacher Alert was started by the family of the child who was slapped.

The page, active since Nov. 4, states that its purpose is to solicit the help of parents, friends, teachers or relatives of any student attending Heroes' to prevent the teacher from returning to school.

A number of parents and former students of the teacher in question have since chimed in on the page, rendering a unanimous verdict in the court of public opinion.

The posts, or in some cases rants, are unverified.

"I've heard he screams and yells," one post read. Another accused the teacher of grabbing her arm firmly 20 years ago when she was a student.

Other allegations on the page said "I heard children say that he has called a few female students sluts and whores."

One poster went so far as to claim, "He has been abusive for a long time, and unfortunately kids aren't taken as seriously as adults so the abuse has been hard to prove. But now? With proof and witnesses he is still not being held accountable? Come on! What needs to happen for him to be fired."

Other accounts claimed the teacher was not supportive enough of the students at sporting events, and occasionally cheered for the opposing team.

While for the most part unsubstantiated, the allegations and the tone of the page clearly lean towards pushing for the teacher's dismissal.

"Come on! I still say we all go to the school and put our "foot down"! I feel it's the only way for immediate action." The post continued to say that mobilizing as a group to deal with the slap would 'pack more of a punch.'

Neither the teacher in question nor the Appalachian Teachers' Union president opted to comment on the slapping incident.

The mother of the child who was slapped could not be reached by press time.

The Record, Nov. 9, 2016

[Previous Story](#)[Next Story](#)*Article rank* | 10 Nov 2016 | *Sherbrooke Record*

# Butler and Farnham

The Butler and Farnham CLC has been up and running since April 2016 with Holly Bailey as the coordinator. It is in the developmental stage building a network within the municipalities and creating ties between the school and the community at large. Of late, their partnership with Free Wheeling, a non-for profit organization based in Cowansville, has made a lot of children & families happy & healthier with the delivery of newly refurbished bicycles! The group Free Wheeling ("Pleins Rayons" in French) trains and works with Autistic young adults and high school students to build and deliver needed bicycles to members of the community. Introducing stationary bikes into classrooms to provide an energy outlet for overly active students has been a welcomed addition by teachers as well. The west end CLC thanks the group for their support and interest in our communities! More projects & partnerships are in the works, so please visit us on FB to stay in the loop: "CLC Bedford- Farnham"



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Article rank | 10 Nov 2016 | Sherbrooke Record

# CLC'S of the Eastern Townships School Board

What do Pope Memorial Elementary in Bury, Princess Elizabeth Elementary in Magog, Richmond Regional High School in Richmond, Asbestos-danville-shipton (ADS) / Drummondville Elementary and Butler / Farnham Elementary schools all have in common?

ANSWER: Aside from all being a part of the Eastern Townships' School Board, they also belong to LEARN'S network of close to 80 Community Schools in Quebec, known as Community Learning Centres (CLC Schools).

CLC Schools develop partnerships to align school and community resources for students and English-speaking community members, supporting the holistic development of citizens and communities. Each CLC School is unique, adapting to the communities they serve. When a school adopts a CLC approach, they become a 'community school', providing a range of resources, services and activities, during and beyond the school day to students, their parents and the wider community.

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SUSPENDU POUR AVOIR GIFLÉ UN ÉLÈVE

# Sort incertain pour un enseignant

ANTOINE LACROIX

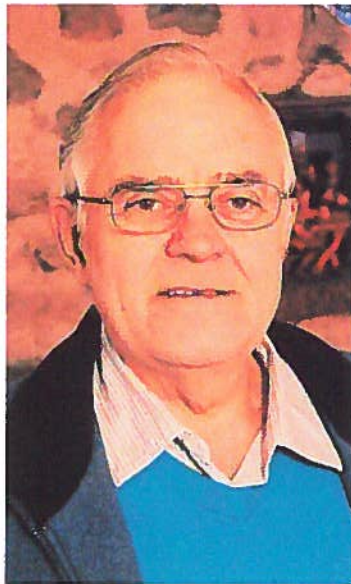
antoine.lacroix@lavoixdelest.ca

**COWANSVILLE** — Un enseignant d'éducation physique, qui aurait giflé un élève de 11 ans, ne reviendra finalement pas enseigner au Heræes Memorial Elementary School de Cowansville, après avoir purgé une suspension de trois mois.

« Il m'a atteint près de l'œil. Il était gonflé et rouge, je pleurais », a raconté le jeune Wyatt Patch, de Dunham, au réseau CTV de Montréal.

L'incident est survenu en juin dernier, alors que Wyatt Patch se disputait avec un camarade de classe dans le corridor. L'éducateur physique Jean Benoit l'aurait giflé au visage. Des douzaines d'étudiants auraient été témoins de la scène, rapporte CTV. « Il est allé devant Wyatt et l'a giflé au visage. Après, il a dit "comment t'as aimé ça ? (*How did you like that?*) " », a indiqué à CTV une étudiante, Jade Gaudreau.

Il y a deux semaines, les parents des élèves de l'école ont reçu une lettre indiquant que Jean Benoit devait revenir au travail le 14 novembre, après une suspension de trois mois décidée par la commission scolaire



Michael Murray, président du conseil des commissaires de la commission scolaire Eastern Township — PHOTO ARCHIVES LA VOIX DE L'EST

Eastern Townships pour son geste. La famille Patch n'en revenait tout simplement pas. « S'il a eu le courage de me claquer le visage, il pourrait le faire à d'autres », a soulevé Wyatt à CTV.

La mère de Wyatt Patch, Julie Perkins, a démarré une page Facebook appelée Teacher Alert, où d'autres parents ont partagé leurs inquiétudes à propos de l'enseignant de longue date,

notamment sur sa façon de s'adresser aux enfants. « Il lançait des jurons à notre classe et nous donnait des noms », a indiqué la sœur de Wyatt, Kaylah Patch, lors d'une entrevue avec CTV.

De son côté, le président du conseil des commissaires de la commission scolaire Eastern Township, Michael Murray, a déclaré à CTV que des questions demeuraient sans réponses. « L'incident n'est pas contesté en tant que tel. La sévérité de l'incident est débattue », dit-il, ajoutant qu'une enquête avait été menée et qu'un renvoi n'était pas jugé nécessaire.

« C'était un coup qui aurait pu être accidentel, ou aurait pu être délibéré. Cela aurait pu être un manque de jugement momentané. Ça aurait pu être beaucoup, beaucoup de choses. Ce n'est pas une raison pour mettre fin à la carrière à un être humain qui a consacré un quart de siècle à l'éducation », croit Michael Murray.

Finalement, il a été décidé que Jean Benoit ne retournera pas au Heræes Memorial Elementary School. Le conseil des commissaires n'a pas encore précisé le rôle qui sera assigné à l'enseignant dans le futur.

Ni Jean Benoit ni le syndicat des enseignants n'ont répondu aux appels de CTV Montréal.

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Article rank 10 Nov 2016 Sherbrooke Record

# School community garden

Our latest project at the Eaton Valley Community Learning Centre is our school community garden at Pope Memorial Elementary.

We started building our garden in May 2016, partnering with the municipality of Bury to apply for funding for materials and landscaping. The beds were built and planted by students and volunteers from the community, some expert, some not, but all very willing. One of our partners, local, organic vegetable farm, "Ferme du Coq a l'ane", provided us with transplants and seedlings to get our garden growing.

Over the summer, our garden flourished thanks to the beautiful weather and some helping hands. In the fall when the students returned to school, we found that we had enough vegetables to share so Cycle 3 students harvested and delivered baskets of vegetables to the residents at St. Paul's Rest Home.

As we put our garden to rest for the winter and look forward to a new start next spring, students are composting food scraps to use as fertilizer for next year's crop. Here are a few comments from the Cycle 2 class about what they are learning:

"The students from Pope Memorial are composting because it is good for the earth and to grow flowers" (Madison) - "The inside of the compost bin looks full of old fruit and vegetables - in the spring it will look like fertilizer" (Chloe) "You put fruit and vegetables and let it rot" to make compost (Connor) "You will use it to feed plants" (Ryan).

On behalf of the students and staff at Pope Memorial, I would like to thank our many volunteers for your interest and support. We look forward to getting our hands dirty together in the future.

Submitted by Kim Fessenden, Coordinator Eaton Valley C.L.C.

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Article rank | 10 Nov 2016 | Sherbrooke Record | By Gordon Lambie

# Art finds a new home at RRHS

Richmond Regional High School inaugurated its new art room yesterday afternoon with a ribbon cutting ceremony that marked the end of more than eight years of effort. The new classroom, which was converted from the space that once housed the school's machine shop, offers a larger and more purposefully designed space for the creation of new works of art both by students and members of the community.



GORDON LAMBIE

**Siu-min Jim, David Sommerville, Kirk Robinson, Bev Taber-smith, Ryley Keenan, Herman Herbers, Julia Barrowman, and Micheal Murray cutting the ribbon on Richmond's new community art room.**

"We're getting a lot of positive response to the new art room," said Julia Barrowman, the RRHS art teacher who has been pushing for the development of such a space for close to a decade. "Art has been the most popular option at Richmond Regional since I was here. This year it was so popular we had to hire a second art teacher."

Aside from being larger than the existing art room at the school the new space features a larger, better sink for cleanup and equipment that will allow students to try their hand at pottery.



The art teacher said that although there was significant interest over the years in the art room project, the amount of renovation work that needed to be done to the old workshop got in the way of the grant-seeking process.

"We got rejected a lot more than accepted," Barrowman said, "Nobody wants to donate to infrastructure."

In 2013 the initiative got a boost when it got as far as the semi-finals in the Aviva Community Fund. Though the art room didn't end up winning that \$50,000 grant, the art teacher said that the campaign surrounding the fund gave the project a massive boost.

"It really validated to us that this is something our community is interested in," explained Richmond Regional High School Community Learning Centre Siumin Jim. "The Aviva campaign really showed that this is the right thing to do for our school and our community."

Though it still took several years to gather the support necessary to finish the room, Jim said that the project received several significant donations from the Richmond region as a direct result of having tried for the Aviva grant.

"Every little bit that was pledged helped," the CLC coordinator said, explaining that existing support generates a kind of snowball effect for other supporters.

Kirk Robinson, Principal of RRHS, said that the project was finally set into motion by a \$5,000 grant from Farm Credit Canada just over 18 months ago.

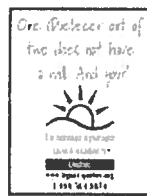
"That grant came with the commitment that we have the room open by Christmas of this year," Robinson said. "As soon as we signed on the dotted line we were committed."

The new space opened for students in September but is only just now getting on its feet in terms of offering opportunities to the community as well

"It's feeling a bit more settled into now," Barrowman said. "Because we're doing it through the CLC we're opening it up not just to the students but also to the community"

In the spirit of that community connection, yesterday's launch invited guests to try out a series of art workshops as well as the opportunity to participate in a collective art project

Reflecting on the process it took to see the renovation through to its completion, Barrowman said she is deeply grateful to all those who supported the work in one way or another over the years.



"Without the community's interest and support this would never have happened," the art teacher said.

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# Richmond and Region Community Learning Centre becomes an extended model CLC

Richmond Regional High School, a CLC School since 2011, recently added two of its feeder elementary schools to its CLC approach. Asbestosdanville-shipton Elementary School and Drummondville Elementary School joined the CLC Network in 2016, uniting with RRHS towards the achievement of common goals.

Here's a little of what is happening at these CLC Schools:

ADS Elementary School CLC students are looking for individuals aged 50 and over for a school project. With the financial assistance granted by the Town of Danville within the action plan of its families and seniors policy 2016-2018, ADS CLC cycle 3 students will have the opportunity to lead interviews with several senior citizens of the Danville and surrounding municipalities. They need you!

Drummondville Elementary School CLC Kindergarten students are reaching out to other communities. Through their Pen Pal project, students are exchanging with other kindergarten students in Val d'or and in Cap-santé. They are sharing about themselves, their families; they are sending crafts and pictures. At DES CLC, we are developing the joys of reading and writing!

RRHS CLC Leadership students recently cooked, served and sold lunch and snacks at the recent Health and Wellness Fair, which showcased over 30 groups from the health, social services & recreational sectors who were there to share how they can serve the Englishspeaking community. The new Schoolcommunity Art Room is up and running with the following workshops offered to the community this month: Paint Night with Julia Barrowman, November 17th from 7pm - 9pm. 18+. (\$25); Arts & Scraps with Literacy in Action, November 23rd from 6:30pm - 8:30pm. (FREE); Build a Pull-along-dog Toy with Julie Derby, November 29 from 3:30pm - 4:30pm. For ages 4 - 6, with parent participation encouraged (\$15). A 4-week Quilting course will also start on Nov 17th (\$25).

CLC Coordinator Contact info:

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