

RWA



News

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JANUARY 2016

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal



A Word From The Administration

The past two months have been eventful ones here at Royal West Academy. In December, our teachers were still operating under the work-to-rule conditions. However, just before we left for our holiday break, we received news that an agreement, in principle, had been reached between the teachers' unions and the provincial government. This was wonderful news for everyone in the RWA community. Since the holiday break, students and teachers have been very excited to return to their ECA programs at school—students have already begun signing up for various activities. The requirement for students to complete three ECAs during the school year has been waived—students will only have to complete one ECA from any category during this 2015–2016 school year. Please note that the list of ECA activities can be found at www.royalwestacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/RWA-ECAs-2015-2016.pdf on the RWA website. We encourage parents to sit together with their child in order to help them plan their ECA choice for the rest of the year.

During the week of December 1–4, RWA students and staff worked together for a wonderful cause. Homerooms competed against one another to see who could collect the most money, non-perishable food items, and toys to support the Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre, the NDG Food Depot, and Westmount Park Elementary School. Our annual Penny Wars was a great success (*see page 5 for details*), as all of our students and staff did a fantastic job promoting the event. Even though we were still under work-to-rule policies at the time, staff and students worked together to show what great work RWA can do to help those less fortunate. During that week, students raised \$6767 for Tyndale St-Georges (*see page 8 for details*), which offers support programs and services for underprivileged communities in the southwest sector of Montreal.

A special thank you to Ms. Purdy for organizing the Toy Drive in which RWA sent over 400 toys to Westmount Park Elementary School, Mr. Zigby for his work during the NDG Food Depot Drive, Mr. Bateman for helping organize the Penny Wars event, and our wonderful SLA students and Mr. Bateman's Leadership classes for all of their dedication during this successful week.



On December 10, RWA once again hosted its annual United Nations Debate. Students in Secondary V Contemporary World participated in a full-day UN debate session during which they represented various nations and organizations from around the world. Students debated several UN resolutions involving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, learning valuable debating skills along the way. Students also learned the importance of teamwork as well as the depth of information involved in this fascinating topic. Special thanks to our dedicated staff—Ms. Cayer, Mr. Dupuis, and Ms. Holloway—for helping organize this very valuable learning experience for our students.

Our return to school in January has also been quite a busy one. During the week of January 11–15, RWA students wrote various Supplemental Exams in subjects such as Math, Histoire, and Science and Technology. All Secondary V students wrote the Français langue seconde exam on January 22. We are very proud at how hard our students prepared for these exams.

As well, during the week of January 25–29, RWA students wrote their mid-year examinations. Students worked very hard to prepare for their exams, with many taking time between exams to get a little extra study time in the library. We would like to congratulate our dedicated teachers and support staff who played an important role in helping prepare our students for what can often be a stressful exercise.

January also saw our third and final Secondary I Parent Seminar take place on January 13. This seminar, which was aimed specifically towards Secondary I parents, presented the topic of *Resilience: How You Can Help Your High-Achieving Child*. The seminar was well attended by parents, who found it very helpful. Many parents remained after the seminar to ask questions of our Student Services Department. A big thank you to Ms. Clark, Mr. Mateus, and Ms. Wineberg for their work and dedication.

Student Services has also begun presenting a new program called *Test Edge*. These series of workshops, offered by Ms. Clark and Ms. Chawki, offer tips and strategies on how students can prepare for exams by working to manage stress and anxiety levels. Thank you Ms. Chawki and Ms. Clark for organizing these

lunch-time workshops and prominently advertising them around the school.

On January 14, the Music Department presented our annual Winter Concert. The event was splendid, with great attendance from our community. As well, our students did an amazing job of performing in front of such a large audience. The RWA Honour Band performed phenomenally, especially considering they had only been able to practice for one week, due to the work-to-rule situation. A great deal of thanks to Ms. Purdy and Ms. Macleod for a phenomenal job of preparing our students for this event.

On January 19, RWA staff and students participated in our annual Winter Carnival Day. The event involved some great activities such as skiing, snowboarding, hockey, tubing, a day at the Rigaud Cabane à Sucre, and an opportunity to enjoy some in-school activities. Students and staff braved some difficult weather conditions, but had a great time nonetheless. Special thanks to the SLA, led by Karley McIlwaine and Chloe Ginsberg, for their efforts in organizing this event.

Royal West Academy will be holding some upcoming Grade Level Trips. On February 2–5, 2016, Secondary V students will be participating in the annual New York City Trip. On February 3–5, 2016, Secondary II students will have the opportunity to participate in the annual Stoneham Ski Trip. Both trips anticipate a great turnout. We expect all students to have a great time!

On February 11, 2016, RWA will host its annual Science Fair. Close to 400 students will be participating while many others will be volunteering their services. Parents are reminded that only those students participating in the Science Fair are expected to attend school that day. Parents and students are free to visit the fair during the school day or the evening session. February 12 and 15, 2016, are Pedagogical Days, and regular classes will resume on February 16, 2016.

Students and parents have already received the 2016–2017 Course Selection Forms. This document serves as your child's registration form for next year. Students presently in Secondary I are required to select their arts course despite not having completed their three rotations of Music, Visual Arts, and Drama. Students may revise their choice for elective courses

later in the year. Any student, at any level, can change their selections any time between January and June by forwarding to the Administration a letter signed by a parent. Placement in an elective of your choice is contingent on enrolment, grades, and prerequisites. If you are concerned about your child's placement in Math or French, we encourage you to meet with your child's teacher at the upcoming Parent-Teacher Evening on March 10, 2016. If your child is not returning to Royal West Academy, please send a letter to that effect as soon as possible.

In an effort to improve communication with our parents, RWA is implementing a pilot project that automates homeroom attendance communication with parents, beginning February 1, 2016. If a student is reported absent **during homeroom**, a parent will receive an automated call informing them of the absence. Some parents may have already informed the office of the upcoming absence as per RWA procedures—we appreciate your efforts to notify us, *however these parents will still receive a call from the system confirming their child's absence*. If a parent has not contacted the school, the message will ask that you call or email the RWA office to justify your child's absence. **This system will only be used for homeroom attendance.** Early dismissals or school activities later in the day will not activate the automated system.

We welcome any feedback from parents in the coming weeks regarding this pilot project. Adjustments may be made as we implement this system, in which case we will continue to keep you informed of such changes. Please feel free to email an Administrator with your comments and/or concerns.

Our Library recently received a much appreciated refurbishing. Mr. Eyal Shoam, owner of the company Artemano, generously offered to take in our library tables to have them sanded and stained. The tables were recently delivered back to us and look wonderful. Thank you Mr. Shoam for your generosity.

As most of our community may already have noticed, traffic lights have been placed at the corner of Westminster Avenue and Avon Road in the hopes that this will improve traffic flow and safety for community members as well as students. We would remind anyone dropping off or picking up students that it is very

important NOT to use Ainslie as a drop-off point, as **Ainslie is a no stopping zone**. Easton Avenue is still the safest place to pick up or drop off students.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to several new staff members:

- Mr. Stephen Anjum (school secretary temporarily replacing Ms. Ibrahim)
- Ms. Laura Paolillo (office secretary)
- Mr. Stavros Christopoulos (night caretaker)
- Ms. Negar Banakar (teacher temporarily replacing Ms. Smiley)
- Ms. Nancy Blouin (teacher temporarily replacing Mme Ouellette)
- Mr. George Fowler (childcare worker)

Finally, we have been faced with some rather harsh weather conditions that sometimes cause delays in getting to school. We request that students and parents plan for these possible delays during the winter months. As you know, the Student Agenda states:

*"All late arrivals require a note justifying their lateness. This note must describe the reason for being late. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action, such as school detention. **Oversleeping, traffic, or missing buses/trains are not justifiable reasons for being late.**"*

Student tardiness is extremely disruptive, and it stifles the learning process. We ask that parents and students make every effort to minimize late arrivals. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Ms. Sarah Goblot, RWA Foundation

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Actually, we love you just the way you are. But you'd be perfect if you joined the Royal West Academy Foundation at the Segal Centre on May 9, 2016, for a special advance performance of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*.

Each year, the RWAf hosts a popular evening at one of Montreal's theatres. For the second year in a row, we are going the Segal Centre for a performance of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, a long running Off-Broadway musical.

Tickets are \$65. The best part? For each ticket that you purchase, you will receive a tax receipt for \$30, as a portion of the ticket price goes to RWA for the auditorium campaign. A limited number of tickets are available, so order yours on the RWAf website at <http://rwaf.ca>. The play starts at 8 PM and there will be refreshments following the performance.



Love is ... A battlefield? A many splendoured thing? All you need? What you want it to be? This incredibly popular musical—the second-longest running in Off-Broadway history—deftly lampoons the oh-so-many moods, stages, and stumbling blocks of romantic relationships, from first-date jitters to nursing home affections. With wit and whimsy, through sketch

and song, Joe DiPietro's laugh-out-loud hit assures us that love is indeed as messy, befuddling, exasperating, and impossible (yet still endlessly addictive!) as we all know it to be.

Fundscrip: Improving your kids' school without changing your habits

Purchase gift cards for groceries, gas, books, or booze through Fundscrip and support the campaign at no extra cost to you. Spend \$25 to buy a Chapters gift card, for example, and you have \$25 to spend at Chapters. Each store then donates a percentage of that gift card to RWA, with an average donation of 3% per order.

Stores include Chapters, IGA, Maxi, Metro, Provigo, Loblaws, Starbucks, Gap, Old Navy, Victoria Secret, Cineplex, Aldo, Best Buy, Bureau en Gros, iTunes ... the full list of stores is available online. Here's how it works:

1. Go online at www.fundscrip.com
2. Signup with invitation code **WMSTBS**
3. Purchase gift cards for your favourite stores.
4. Get the cards delivered to the school or to your home.
5. Shop as you normally do, but pay with the gift cards. You are still eligible to collect fidelity points at the store.
6. Watch the school benefit from your support.
7. Repeat.

Any questions can be directed to the RWAf's Lindsay McLeod at lindscot@videotron.ca.

Save the date: April 1, 2016

We're working on a concert that promises to bring back some of Royal West Academy's top students who went on to study music to play with musicians from the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal and other top musical ensembles. The 7 PM concert will be followed by a wine and cheese reception.

More details in the next RWA News.

The Royal West Academy Foundation

The RWAf is run by volunteer parents and is currently focused on transforming our over 80-year-old auditorium into a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre for our children. The auditorium plays a central

role in the academic life and extra-curricular activities at Royal West Academy.

If you have any questions, would like to volunteer, or have any fundraising ideas, contact the foundation at rwafoundation@gmail.com. You can also make a donation at <http://rwaf.ca>.

Science Fair

By Ms. Jennifer Pevec, RWA
Science Fair Coordinator



How many species of bacteria can be found in your home? How music affects your mood? Does chewing gum increase your concentration levels? Royal West Academy students will be answering these and many other interesting questions at the 27th annual Science Fair, happening on February 11, 2016.

In the morning, almost 400 students from Secondary II to Secondary V will present their projects to judges—both academic and non-academic.

Then in the afternoon, the RWA Science Fair will be open to the public from 1 PM to 2:30 PM, when visitors can vote for their favourite project—The People's Choice Award. Other special awards will also be determined during this time.

The public can also attend the RWA Science Fair from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. Students look forward to presenting their projects during this time as the pressure of official judging will be over by then.

The day comes to a close with the awards ceremony, where RWA Science Fair participants, family, friends, and judges are all welcome to attend. Hope to see you there!

For more information, contact Jennifer Pevec at rwasciencefaircoordinator@gmail.com.

Tyndale Penny Wars

By Mr. Jeff Bateman

Once again this school year the students and staff of Royal West Academy spent the first week of December raising funds for Tyndale St-Georges, a community centre located in



Little Burgundy that offers empowering programs and services to that community from birth through adulthood.

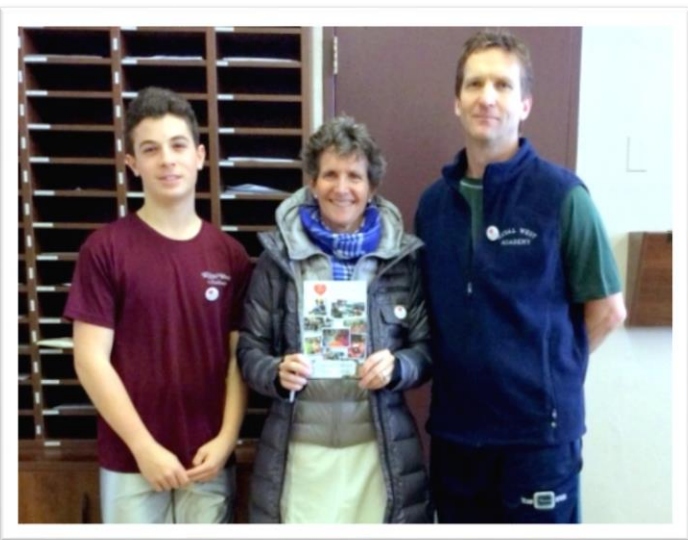
Penny Wars is our favourite way to raise money for a great cause, build school and grade spirit, and, with a little luck, win an afternoon off! The challenge for everyone is to bring their money to school to win the five-day War by giving coins to their own grade and giving other denominations to the other grades. Coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters) count as points toward a grade's total, while other denominations (loonies, toonies, bills, cheques) count as "bombs" and subtract from a grade's point total. Points are tallied daily during Tyndale Week and the school is given a breakdown on where each grade stands each morning. Strategies are adopted and abandoned like Monday morning on Wall Street. Some believe there is great promise in going big on the last day, others believe that a regular and steady buildup is the correct approach.



The results have been mixed with winners coming from both schools of thought. This year, thanks to the support of the homeroom teachers, SLA, and RWA students, the Penny Wars and school dress-down day combined to raise \$6767. Secondary I won the competition after accumulating 76,054 points over the week and earning the afternoon off on February 22, 2016.

While the funds we raised will of course help the good people at Tyndale St-Georges to better meet the needs of their community, but here at RWA we get an even bigger gift—the opportunity to witness what many

hands working together can accomplish with very little effort. Once again this community of staff and students raise awareness and rise to the challenge.



The Leadership & Leisure Studies students would like to thank everyone for their support throughout Tyndale Week—the teachers who took extra duty, the students who helped keep the halls clean, and the administration and office staff for their cooperation and patience. Your generosity and enthusiasm for this cause was inspiring.

Swim Team

By Mme Lynn Bourdeau



Hello from the Royal West Academy swim team!

We will be attending two qualifying meets this season, along with the championship meet in Côte Saint-Luc on February 16, 2016.

We are looking forward to participating in the GMAA swim meets, bringing back some medals, and hopefully winning a banner!

RWA Alumni Association

By Ms. Sarah Goblot, RWA Foundation

Reunions for the classes of 1991 (25 years), 1996 (20 years), and 2006 (10 years) are currently in discussion. More information will be available in upcoming editions of the RWA News, including dates and contacts.

Keep yourself up to date by joining the MWHS-RWA Alumni Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MWHS.RWA.AlumniAssociation.

Draft Bill 86

Greater powers for parents or simply the illusion of power?

By Ms. Lori Rinaldi, Governing Board Chairperson

Draft Bill 86 is a pending bill that seeks to amend the existing Education Act by the Québec provincial government. The Bill is likely to be passed, and may in fact become law as early as March or April of this year.

The problem

No one knows much about it! Parents are for the most part in the dark, as are school teachers, staff, and administrators. Since the initial stages, there has been little effort by the Québec provincial government to consult with these representative bodies to discuss the provisions of the proposed changes as well as their impact on both the political and educational forefront. It has only been over the last few days—following increasing public and political pressure—that the Education Minister has invited each of the Commission scolaire de Montréal (CSDM) and the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) to present briefs. These discussions are scheduled for January 28–February 23, 2016, and will include multiple stakeholders.

In short, the provincial government's spin is that the adoption of Bill 86 will provide “greater powers for parents” in their ability to shape and influence the future of education in Québec. However, nowhere in this Bill does it define what those powers are, nor how they will be applied.

Why this Bill is controversial

If passed as it is proposed today, this Bill will:

- allow the elimination of universal suffrage, effectively erasing an entire tier of democracy, namely the school boards;
- confer greater powers to the Québec provincial government regarding how our schools are run, the resources allocated to our schools, and the

mechanism to decide upon school closures and/or transfers, among other things.

In short, this Bill will redefine the Québec education system as a whole. Moreover, it could result in great inconsistencies and inequalities between schools, regardless of their language of teaching.

Why this Bill undermines the constitutional right of minority languages

Article 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states the following:

“...the provincial governments are required to provide education to Canadians in the official language of their choice, even in areas where a minority of residents speak that language...”

....In Québec, where most people speak French, Canadian citizens have the right to have their children educated in English:

- ***if they received their own primary instruction in Canada in English, or***
- ***if they have a child who has received or is receiving his or her education in English in Canada.***

The right to receive an education in a minority language applies when there is a sufficient number of eligible children to justify providing schooling in that language. Where those numbers do exist, governments must provide the necessary facilities.”

It is difficult for anyone to dispute the fact that there is a “sufficient number of eligible children” to justify English schooling in Québec. The adoption of Bill 86 can see this right removed from minority language communities.

What has been done so far and what can be done going forward

On January 12, the RWA Governing Board members sat for a special meeting. Following extensive discussion, a vote by secret ballot was taken to either accept or reject Bill 86 as it is being proposed today. **The Bill was unanimously rejected.**

On January 16, a full-day work session took place at Trinity United Church in Montreal with EMSB Parent Delegates and Alternate Delegates, as voted by parents.

Further discussions took place regarding the Bill, with **the overwhelming majority of representatives voting against Bill 86.**

Each and every member of the community, as a taxpayer and constituent, has a voice—let it be heard! The EMSB has drafted a letter that taxpayers can sign and return to the School Board. The letter can be found on their website at www.emsb.qc.ca/emsb_en/pdf_en/2015-2016/Letter%20to%20Minister%20Blais%20from%20parents%20and%20other%20tax%20payers.pdf?id=3772. Once signed, the letter should faxed to the EMSB at 514-483-7324, to the attention of Ms. Vincenza Caruso, Secretary, Office of the Chairman.

Your RWA Governing Board is encouraging you to do your part. Take action and let your voice be heard!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February	Bardolators present: Shakescenes
Feb 2–3	Leadership trip: Winter Survival
Feb 2–5	Secondary II trip: Stoneham QC
Feb 2–5	Secondary V trip: New York NY
February 8	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
Feb 8–11	Staff Appreciation Week
February 10	Salon des inventions
February 11	Science Fair
February 12	Pedagogical day
Feb 13–Mar 2	India exchange
February 15	Pedagogical day
February 16	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
February 19	SLA Dance
February 22	Governing Board meeting @ 7 pm
Feb 24–Mar 5	Art trip: Europe
Feb 25–27	CRC Robotics Competition
Feb 29–Mar 4	March Break

RWA



News

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RWA News is published during the academic year (from September to May) on the Royal West Academy website at www.royalwestacademy.com. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwanews@gmail.com.





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Tyndale St-Georges
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December 31, 2015

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal
Royal West Academy
189 Easton Avenue
Montreal West, QC H4X 1L4

Dear Mr. Pita,

On behalf of Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre, thank you for your generous gift of \$6767.07. We are grateful you have chosen to support Tyndale St-Georges programs. If you would like to see them in action, it would be our pleasure to give you a guided tour.

From its founding in 1927, one would never imagine how Tyndale St-Georges has grown and the positive impact it has made on so many lives in our community of Little Burgundy. We welcome over 250 people daily. Parents with their infants, adolescents and teens, newly arrived immigrants, and adults of the community participate in our programs. Each year, over 300 people give of their precious time to volunteer. Our principal goal in all of our programs is to promote the development of new skills to empower and help each person reach their true potential.

Thank you again for your support of the work that goes on behind our bright red doors. We are very grateful!

Wishing you and yours a very happy holiday season and all the best for 2016!

Warmest regards,

Susan McKinnon Bell
Director - Fund Development

*A huge thanks to the
Royal West community!*

SMB/ Enregistrement/Registration: B/N 108146754 RR0002

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