

# RWA



# News

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SEPTEMBER 2016

### A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal



It has been a great start to the school year at Royal West Academy. We would like to offer a warm welcome to our newest additions, Secondary I students, and upper graders who are new to the RWA family.

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

- Mme Alissa Bakouri (français)
- Mme Nancy Blouin (français)
- Ms. Stephanie Leech-Pepin (Visual Art and Social Studies)
- Ms. Jaimie Dimopoulos (Guidance Counsellor)
- Ms. Jag Trehin (Spiritual and Community Animator)
- Ms. Anna Supino (Librarian).

Most of you will remember Mr. Jan Mateus, who recently retired after 23 years as a guidance counsellor at RWA. Mr. Mateus has agreed to return on a part-time basis to work with our students in the MindPOP program. We are grateful for his dedication to supporting our students.

This school year began on an enthusiastic note, with the Student Life Association welcoming the Secondary I students at our annual Orientation on August 29. The SLA members organized activities and tours of the school in the hope that students would be well prepared for their first day of school. Special thanks to our co-Presidents Jennifer Lynch and Sam Galler for their leadership in making this event possible.

The RWA Foundation organized our third annual Royal West Academy Start of Year Celebration, which took place on September 16. Volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours toward the organization of this event. Students, parents, staff, and community members were treated to large inflatable games, great food and beverages, and a visit from the SPVM's Mounted Police. The evening proved to be a huge success with proceeds going to the RWA Auditorium Renovation Project. Special thanks to Kirk Kelly (parent of a 2015 graduate), Mitch White, and Sarah Goblot for their leadership in organizing this memorable event!

Once again, during the first week of school, staff members were visible in their brightly coloured vests, directing the student pedestrian traffic from the Montréal-Ouest train station. Pedestrian safety procedures were also reviewed at our annual start of year assembly. We ask that parents discuss the issue of traffic safety with their child(ren). Please note that there are three different commuter trains running through the Montréal-Ouest train station. Assume that there may be more than one train coming through at a time. Remember to look both ways, cross the roads only at the crosswalks specified for students, stay alert, do not wear headphones, and practice safety first!

In addition, there are large numbers of students boarding the STM buses after school. It is important to line up and board the bus in an orderly fashion, so that



no one gets hurt. Parent drivers are reminded that the drop-off and pick-up of students takes place **ON EASTON AVENUE ONLY!** Easton Avenue is the only safe drop-off area for students. Ainslie Road is a No Stopping Zone. If you drop off your child on Ainslie, you risk receiving an \$85 ticket from Public Security. Also, please note that the **Easton Avenue is a one-way street leading away from Westminster Avenue South.** Therefore, drivers accessing Easton from Westminster to drop off their child on that side of the school must continue around the block to Ainslie in order to get back onto Westminster. This is being done to ensure the public's security as traffic in the area increases due to the closure of the Saint-Jacques exit off of Highway 20. We ask that parents remain vigilant while navigating this area. Please keep our students and staff safe!

Our Meet the Secondary I Teacher Evening was held on September 7. Despite an intense heat wave, over 200 parents attended this event. Parents were given short presentations by teachers from all subject domains including MindPOP. They also had an opportunity to hear from the administration, the Secondary I homeroom teachers, and our school guidance department. We know that the transition to high school may be difficult. We highly recommend that students should have a period of relaxing downtime! Parents are encouraged to ensure that their child **NOT** have a cell phone or computer available during times of rest. Cell phones should not be used as alarm clocks. The distractions far outweigh the benefits.

Members of our three major parent organizations—RWA Home & School, RWA Foundation, and RWA Governing Board—also gave presentations and welcomed parents to Royal West Academy. For more information on upcoming events and opportunities to get involved at RWA, please consult their respective websites which can all be accessed through the RWA website at [www.royalwestacademy.com](http://www.royalwestacademy.com).

On September 22–23, over 160 students participated in our annual Secondary I Trip to the Laurentians. Special thanks to our trip organizers, Mme Bourdeau and Mme Dupaul, and the teacher chaperones for their time and effort in making these trips possible.

On September 19, Royal West Academy opened its doors to over 1000 visitors at our annual Open House. Special thanks to the volunteer students and parents who were great ambassadors for RWA. Qualifying tests were written on September 24 and 25. Special thanks to Mr. Mateus, Ms. Wineberg, Ms. Dimopoulos, Ms. Di Pietro, Ms. Taylor, and our student monitors for all their hard work in organizing and administering these tests.

At the RWA Governing Board's annual general meeting on September 29, the following parents were elected to two-year terms as parent representatives: Mr. Ryan Ortiz, Ms. Lori Rinaldi, Ms. Anne Monereau, and Ms. Arzine Brochu. These four members will join parents in the second year of their two-year term: Mr. Michael Delis, Mr. Michael Mendelson, Mr. Norm Gharibian, and Ms. Deidre Dimock. Mr. Gharibian was also elected as the Regional/CPC Delegate for Royal West Academy. Serving as Alternate Delegate will be Ms. Monereau.

The Governing Board will hold its first meeting on October 19, 2016 at 7 PM in the school library. At that time, the Governing Board will decide on the dates for all future meetings. Meetings are open to the public and a question period is always part of the agenda. Minutes from all meetings can be found on the RWA website.

The next meeting for the RWA Home & School Association will be on October 18, 2016 at 7:30 PM. The Home & School provides much needed funds for pedagogical materials, special events, and building improvements. With your help, the Home & School will undoubtedly be in a position to make many more contributions that will enhance your child's educational experience at RWA. All our parents are encouraged to get involved!

If your child requires tutoring at any time this year, RWA has an excellent peer tutoring program at minimal cost. Any questions or concerns in this area should be directed to Ms. Di Pietro, our School-Community Animator (ECA Coordinator), at [sdipietro@emsb.qc.ca](mailto:sdipietro@emsb.qc.ca).

We continue to make improvements to our facilities. Thanks to the Home & School and the EMSB, over 700 new lockers were installed this September. Delays in



the manufacturing of the lockers meant that some students did not have lockers during the first week of school, an inconvenience that our students handled extremely well. Over 50 years of rust and deterioration will be replaced by beautiful and functional lockers that meet our students' needs. Functional and aesthetically pleasing improvements were also made to our Art Room (103) thanks to the generosity and hard work of Mr. Michael Mendelson and Mr. Daniel Rametta from the Home & School. Funding for this project was made possible after schools received surplus budget allocations from the EMSB. This summer also saw a masonry project completed on the main building by the Material Resources Department.

Royal West Academy has a long tradition of acceptance, awareness, and action on social justice issues. In that spirit, RWA has responded to requests from our students to include an all-gender washroom in the second floor west wing area of the school. Students uncomfortable with using this space can still use six gender-specific washrooms located throughout the school. Royal West Academy has also added private changing stalls for students in Physical Education classes. Surplus budgets from the EMSB also contributed to this improvement of our locker room facilities. We are extremely proud of how our community has responded to these important changes.

As many of you already know, our parents have been extremely generous with their time to improve the physical environment of our school. Once again this year, the Home & School will be seeking parent volunteers to continue the great work by painting other areas of the building. Please stay tuned for details in the coming weeks.

Finally, RWA would like to congratulate Esme Bale, a Secondary IV student who is presently featured in a special marketing campaign promoting the EMSB's slogan "Être bilingue, c'est gagnant!". Television commercials, signage, and promotional items help promote the fact that being bilingual represents a winning formula for Montrealers.

The administration and staff wish all our students and parents a successful and enjoyable year!

# SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Mr. Mitchell White, RWA Foundation

The Royal West Academy Foundation was incorporated in 1998 by parent volunteers and was mandated to raise the funding for three capital improvement projects: a new gym, renovation of the auditorium, and the enlargement of the current library. The gym campaign has been completed—\$2 million was raised for what we now call the "new gym". The new gym is a vital part of Royal West Academy's life that the students benefit from on a daily basis.

Our next project is to transform the current 80-year-old auditorium into a performing arts centre. Raising \$2.2 million is the largest and most ambitious public school campaign ever. But with your help we can achieve it. The auditorium is used every day of the week for band practices, theatre rehearsals, musicals, dance shows, recitals, model UN debates, and assemblies.

Over the last three years, we have raised over \$400,000 through hockey raffle campaigns, Start Of The Year celebrations, and theatre events. Because we've broken down the project into stages (no pun intended), instead of waiting to achieve all the necessary funding, the money that raised so far has already been invested in a new \$80,000 sound and theatre light system and \$14,000 skyjack, allowing our teachers and students to adjust the sounds and lights for every production and event in the auditorium.

Engineers and architects have finalized \$200,000 worth of plans that are required for the renovations. With school commissioner Mr. Joe Lalla's help at the EMSB, we've asked the province for funds to pay for most of the rest of the project. We are proud to report that the Government has announced RWA is in line to receive a \$500,000 grant towards this project. We are investing the funds in your children so please help us raise the balance.

We need to keep making progress—the next stage is air conditioning. If you have ever been in the auditorium for a meeting or event on a warm evening, then you





know why. Imagine what it's like in the day when the sun shines down on this very room. Every day, our kids work in the auditorium; they write their exams in the auditorium. They deserve better. We need your help to get that air conditioning installed by next summer.



You can help by making a capital campaign donation to the Foundation, and you will receive a tax receipt for the full amount. Or you can join us for *Prom Queen: The Musical* at the Segal Centre For Performing Arts on October 27, 2016—there's no school the next day, so bring your kids! Each ticket purchased will give you a tax receipt for \$24. Tickets are available for purchase at <http://rwaf.ca>. By purchasing your tickets within the next two weeks, you help us with our planning.

However you can help, it will be appreciated. This is our school, these are our kids, and this is our time. The parents who came before us donated and the school is a better place. Let's join together and make sure we leave the school a better place for the families who come after us.

Our website is <http://rwaf.ca>. Please donate.

Pay it forward.

### The Royal West Academy Foundation

We are always looking for new members—it is never too late to join!

The parent-run fundraising group at RWA is calling for any parents, alumni, or students, to help out with the Foundation.

We are raising money to upgrade to a new Performance Arts Centre (PAC) to replace our out-of-date auditorium.

Whether you can attend all our monthly meetings, show up occasionally, or help out on the sidelines, we need your help. Our next meetings are at 7 PM on:

- Tuesday, October 4, 2016
- Monday, November 7, 2016
- Monday, December 5, 2016

## Welcome Back BBQ

By Sam Galler



On September 9, students of all grades came out to the Welcome Back BBQ! All members of our Student Life Association were outside for the entire day setting up and running the BBQ. Tickets were sold prior to the event by SLA members inviting students to buy hotdogs, veggie dogs, freezies, and drinks.

The event took place throughout the entire lunch period. Even students who were not eating at the BBQ were invited to participate! The back field was filled with music and a great atmosphere. Booths were set up all over the field for students to “get married”, have their fortunes predicted, eat watermelon, and play volleyball using our outdoor net. The BBQ turned out to be a huge success as students were lined up across the field to enjoy our hotdogs.

The hot dogs had been prepared by teachers and were served by SLA members and teachers alike. Our Environment Committee also volunteered to help out with the BBQ by preparing delicious homemade vegan snacks for students to purchase. The Sound and Lighting Crew also helped out by providing the dance with the proper equipment to blast music throughout the field.

The Welcome Back BBQ is a great tradition we have here at Royal West Academy. It gives the students a chance to take a break from all the stress of the start of a new school year. As SLA co-presidents it had been Jennifer Lynch's and my responsibility to organize this BBQ. Considering this was our first official school-wide activity as co-presidents, there was quite a lot riding on the success of the event. Luckily the students seemed to love it and we were given plenty of positive feedback. Managing the BBQ meant spending the day instructing our fellow SLA members and coming up with ideas to

ensure a constant high level of enthusiasm to be had by all.

With one very positive event down, RWA can be assured that many more events like this will follow! I would like to give special thanks to Mr. Zigby for providing us every year with the hotdogs that the students all enjoyed. If all goes well I'm sure another BBQ will take place next year that will be just as good, if not better than this year's!

## Start Of The Year Celebration

By Ms. Sarah Goblot, RWA Foundation

Three years running and 2000 strong!

The Start Of The Year Celebration gets better and better each year. More students, more parents, more rides, and more fun!

If you were able to attend the event on September 16, then you know that it was a perfect day. Strands of blue cotton candy filled the air, corn popped, brownies were munched on, and students (along with a few adults) ran from ride to ride. The weather was perfect, whether it was for climbing up a mountain, jumping into the air, or just sitting and chatting with other parents over a beer.

The robotic and art displays were very popular this year, with lots of ooh-ing and ahh-ing over the artwork and trying out the robots. Unfortunately, we didn't have any science projects to display, so if you have a winning





project at this year's science fair, please hang onto it because we'd love to showcase YOUR science project at next year's Start Of The Year Celebration.

The Start Of The Year Celebration is intended not only for students and their families, but also their friends. So it was great to see friends from other schools—according to a completely unscientific survey, there were students from Villa Maria High School, Lauren Hill Academy, Collège Notre-Dame, and Lakeside Academy, among others. We'll need to find a way to track all the different schools next year—so keep on inviting your friends!

There were a few hiccups. There were so many students volunteering that we had to turn some away, and we need to revise the sign-up process next year, but thanks to all who signed up—your commitment to helping putting the “fun” into RWA is greatly appreciated. We'll also send out fewer emails next year.

This type of event would not have happened without the volunteers behind the scenes and on the day of. So we need to give a big shout-out to the SLA, the Sound and Light Crew, and all of our student and adult volunteers. Special thanks go to Ms. Lindsay McLeod (adult volunteer coordinator), Mr. Allan Ptack (student volunteer coordinator), Mr. Robert Cerminara (50/50 draw, and wherever he was needed), Ms. Pat Barillaro (bake table coordinator), Mr. Patrick Marcovecchio (food coordinator), Mr. Ken Elman (web), Mr. Mitch White (everything), Mr. Michael Mendelson (bar), Ms. Patricia Taylor (everything), Mr. Tony Pita (for the pies), Mr. Steve Manstavich (he knows why), and Ms. Chantal Juhasz (for her hair). In particular, a giant thank you, and farewell, to Mr. Kirk Kelly, who had the idea for the celebration, and who led it for three years, even after his son graduated—you've left your mark ☺

Also a big thanks to our photography team: Ms. Talia Dezso (Montreal West resident, <http://taliadezso.com>), Mr. Ken Elman, and Mr. Robert Ganz. You can see their photos on on the Foundation's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/royalwest/](http://www.facebook.com/royalwest/) . And you can thank Majd for the tunes ([www.facebook.com/MAJDofficial/](http://www.facebook.com/MAJDofficial/)).

Thanks as well to our sponsors: Aramark, Dominos, BeaverTails, and the town of Montreal West.



## LOST AND FOUND POLICY

Please be advised that the Lost and Found boxes are cleaned out on the 15th of each month. While labeled items are returned to their owners, several bags of unclaimed unlabeled items are removed and donated to charity every month. So if you are looking for lost items, make sure to look for them before the 15th!

The Lost and Found bins are located in three areas at Royal West Academy:

- outside the new gym
- outside the guidance office
- in the main office under the teachers' mailboxes

In the meantime, please label all your belongings!



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 4	Pedagogical Day (afternoon only)
October 4	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
October 5	ID photo retakes
October 6	Secondary I Parent Seminar @ 7 PM
October 10	Thanksgiving Day
Oct 13–14	Grad photos
October 14	RWA Debate Tournament
Oct 17–21	Waste Reduction Week
October 18	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
October 19	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
October 21	SLA Dance
October 27	Secondary III vaccinations
October 28	Pedagogical Day
October 31	Halloween: Free Dress Day

# 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](http://www.royalwestacademy.com) . Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at [rwanews@gmail.com](mailto:rwanews@gmail.com) .



Join the **Royal West Academy Foundation** for a

*Night at the Segal Centre*  
on **Thursday, October 27th at 8pm**



The Segal is proud to be producing the **world premiere of an outrageously fun, new musical celebration about being true to yourself in the face of adversity. Prom Queen: The Musical** is based on the true story of Marc Hall, the Ontario teen who took his Catholic District School Board to court for the right to bring his boyfriend to prom. His fight for equality rallied a town, made international headlines and inspired a nation.

A **limited number of tickets** for the Thursday evening performance have been made available as a **special fundraiser for Royal West Academy** in support of the new auditorium.

Segal Centre for Performing Arts, 5170 Cote-Ste-Catherine, Montreal, Qc, H3W 1M7

**Tickets are \$65 (tax incl.)** A tax receipt will be issued for \$24.

Use the form below or **buy your tickets online at [rwaf.ca](http://rwaf.ca)**

Name:

Email:

Tel:

Child:

Home room:

Address (required for tax receipt)

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ tickets @ \$65 each for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ My cheque payable to the RWA Foundation is included. **Or buy online at [rwaf.ca](http://rwaf.ca).**

Tickets will be available for pickup the night of the play.

Please return the form to the school office: RWAF, 189 Easton Ave., Montreal West, QC H4X 1L4