

RWA



NEWS

WWW.ROYALWESTACADEMY.COM

October 2024

Words From The Admin



*Principal Tony Pita (center)
with Vice-Principal Catherine Lumsden (left) and
Vice-Principal Lynn Bourdeau (right)*

Welcome Back! Le bonheur de se retrouver!

The administration team is excited to welcome back students, staff, and parents to the 2024-2025 academic year.

Une rentrée pleine d'activités et de retrouvailles

Open house

The guided tours sold out very quickly again, but walk-ins are always welcome. Our students are great ambassadors. They offered visitors some insight on a day in the life of a Royal West student. We believe between 1,500 and 2,000 visitors were in attendance. Thank you to all staff and students who represented our school so well.

Grade 7 meet the teacher

We hosted our annual grade 7 meet the teacher night. This year's event was held virtually and was extremely well attended. Parents had a chance to meet their child's teachers including their homeroom teachers. Student services also did a presentation regarding services that support our students' well-being and success including: our ECAs, peer tutoring, and MindPOP programs.

Welcome Assemblies

We held our annual Welcome Back Assembly on September 12th. All students were treated to a very entertaining presentation by their peers, that included many of the enriching activities offered at our school. The administration also reviewed important safety information. As a reminder, please do not use the Broughton/Westminster crosswalk when walking from the train station. The required and safer route uses the Ainslie crosswalk. Student safety is a great concern therefore detentions will be given to students who choose not to cross at the Ainslie crosswalk.

September 27th – first Spirit Day of the year

It is always great to see all the activities students are involved in and to see the students showing their school spirit! Spirit Day is generally held on the last Friday of every month!

September 30th – Orange Shirt Day

We had a strong participation on this especially important day supporting reconciliation and becoming more aware of the impacts of Residential Schools.

October 8th – Awards Ceremony

RWA took a moment to celebrate student achievements with certificates and awards in different subjects, competitions, sports, and in our ECA program. Congratulations to all of our winners.

Staffing Changes

New staff members:

- Lynn Bourdeau (Vice Principal M-Z)
- Dagmar Hipfner (Math)
- Ruth Bensoussan (Math)
- Jessica Gold (ELA/ Drama)
- Noah Stevens (FLE/PPO)
- A.J. Macpherson (Ed Tech/CCQ/Finance)
- Jason Villani (Caretaker)
- Louis Karras (Caretaker)
- Jenet Calliste (Caretaker)
- Kroeger, Marcus (Caretaker)
- Kroeger, Heidi (Cafeteria)
- Ibetal El-Beset (Lab Tech)
- Mikaela Goldsmith (Community Animator)
- Abigail Rachelson (Secretary)
- Satmit Kaur Mathon (SOT)
- Kimberly Shrier (Youth Counsellor)

Finalement, je ressens que du bonheur de retrouver l'Académie Royal West et d'appartenir à cette communauté exceptionnelle. Merci pour l'accueil chaleureux et je vous souhaite à toutes et à tous une très belle année.

*Mme Lynn Bourdeau
Directrice adjointe*

WELCOME BACK!
Le bonheur de se retrouver!



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Parent Leaders 2024-25

Royal West Academy would like to welcome our parent leaders for the 2024-2025 school year. We encourage all our parents to get involved.

Mr. Eric Lamoureux has been elected as Chairperson of the **RWA Governing Board**. The names of all Governing Board members as well as minutes of all meetings can be found on the RWA website under the [Governing Board](#) tab.

Mr. Lamoureux can be reached by emailing rwagb@emsb.qc.ca. Meeting dates are listed on the RWA website and the [RWA Calendar](#). Meetings are open to all parents and there is a question period on the agenda at the end of every meeting. Please note these meetings are not intended to discuss personal issues affecting your child. In those cases, parents should contact their child's teacher or Vice Principal.

Ms. Jessica Houde-Woytiuk was elected by the general assembly to be the RWA representative to the **EMSBC Parents' Committee (EMSBCPC)**. Ms. Houde-Woytiuk submits a monthly report to the RWA Governing Board about the activities of the EMSBCPC. Her report can be viewed in the minutes of the RWA GB monthly meetings.

The RWA Home & School Co-Presidents are Preetha Krishnamoorthy and Kelly Arfin-Gurevitch. The Home and School can be reached at RWAHSA@gmail.com. Home and School information can be found on the RWA website under the [Home & School](#) tab. Meeting dates are listed on the [RWA Calendar](#) and they are open to all RWA parents.

The Royal West Academy Foundation President is Jesse Chaim. The RWA Foundation can be reached at info@rwaf.ca. Foundation information can be found on the RWA website under the [Foundation](#) tab or visit rwaf.ca.

Meeting dates are listed on the [RWA Calendar](#) and they are open to all parents.

We would like to thank all our parent leaders for their time and dedication to Royal West Academy!

Welcome Back BBQ

Once again, this year, the Student Life Association (SLA) put on a wonderful event. We have an exceptional group of students in SLA this year. Our students celebrated the new school year with tasty food and lots of activities.



- Oct. 21 - 25 - MindPOP
- Oct. 21 - 25 - Waste Reduction week
- Oct. 21 - Sec. 4 CEGEP Presentation, p. 2
- Oct. 22 & 23 - Sec. 3 & 5 Vaccinations
- Oct. 24 - PPO meeting - Virtual
- Oct. 24 - EMSB Career Fair
- Oct. 25 - RWA Spirit Day
- Oct. 25 - Terry Fox Run Sec. 2, p. 5&6
- Oct. 28 - Sec. I Day Trip
- Oct. 30- RWAHSA meeting - Virtual
- Oct. 31 - Dress Down Day; Halloween
- Nov. 1 - Ped Day
- Nov. 7 - RWA Foundation Event 6:30-8:30 pm
- Nov. 11 - RWAF meeting - Virtual

RWA NEWS

Editor Kelly Arfin-Gurevitch (RWA parent)
Junior Assistant Editor Chloe B. (Sec V student)
Junior Assistant Editor Laaibah A. (Sec V student)
Staff Advisor Lynn Bourdeau (Vice-Principal)

RWA News is published during the academic year on the school's website at www.royalwestacademy.com. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwaneews@gmail.com



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Open House: A Smashing Success

By: Angelina T.

Once again, Royal West's Open House wowed parents and kids alike with its strong academic programs, diverse extracurricular activities, and outstanding staff members. School spirit soared on the night of September 19th as visitors flooded into the foyer of Royal West Academy. Close to 200 hardworking student volunteers served as tour guides, greeters, and club representatives all night long, impressing parents with their involvement and dedication. Similarly, our staff demonstrated their commitment to the Open House with a variety of creative activities. Shrieks of surprise were heard from Mr. Zigby's physics room as kids got harmlessly "shocked" by an experiment (don't worry, parents - it's completely safe!). Meanwhile, visitors enjoyed delicious snickerdoodle treats from the Green Bean Café, organized by Mrs. Almeida and members of the Environment Committee. Excitement filled every room and hallway, which is no surprise—after all, what's not to love about Royal West?

Upon interviewing many parents and kids, it became evident that Royal West exceeded many of their expectations, winning numerous families over.

So, what makes Royal West their preferred choice? What kind of qualities or values are visitors looking for in high schools?

Chris, a parent, answered: "Strong academics and strong extracurriculars." Victoria, another parent, said: "Rigorous intellectual and academic programs, a well-rounded culture of kindness, and a pursuit of excellence." Her son James added, "Sports, extracurriculars, and a welcoming environment."

They all loved the Open House!

Many kids and parents were delighted when finding out about our extensive club list, ranging from our Dungeons & Dragons club to our Club de Thé. The French department especially pleased many parents who are looking to offer their children a balanced bilingual education. Royal West Academy's unique academic programs allow students to challenge themselves and excel intellectually. Just take it from some of our staff members: according to Mrs. Suarez – our cherished art teacher of 12 years – Royal West students are very resourceful, highly motivated, and extremely dedicated to their art projects. How do our students achieve this? Through their hard work, and that of all of our teachers, administration, guidance counselors, social workers, nurse and caretakers. All of this, and so much more, were all on proud display at our Open House, so do not forget to come by next year!

An Enlightening Journey:

Pharmaceuticals & Traditional Medicine

By: Huda R.

This past summer, from August 12th to 16th, a select group of 12 high school students including myself had the wonderful opportunity to participate in a paid internship focused on traditional indigenous medicine and pharmaceuticals.

First, we spent two days in a Centre d'expertise et de recherche appliquée en sciences pharmaceutiques, or a CERASP lab, where we had the chance to make skincare and wellness products such as body scrubs and cough drops. Walking around and exploring the building with our badges and lab coats made us feel like real experts in the field! In the lab, we learned about a project that was in the works about the extraction of mushroom cytokine as an alternative to the typical shrimp cytokine used in medicine.

On our second day, we visited Clef-des-Champs in Val-David, where we were treated to an in-depth tour of the facilities. We gained insight into the different uses of plants in indigenous medicine while basking in the beautiful August sun. We were also introduced to the way these products are formulated, packaged, and then sold to the public. During our lunch break, we dropped by their lovely store to enjoy some scrumptious detoxing lattes and flavourful herbal teas. Visiting the "witch garden" was an especially exciting part of this day, as we saw a variety of toxic plants, such as belladonna, a popular poison in Ancient Rome.

On the last two days, we were introduced to Cégep de Maisonneuve's techno campus, where we discovered the ideal ways to store and package products to be sent to consumers. Older students presented their findings on different packaging methods like vacuum sealing. We were also able to play around and test some of these methods ourselves!

This fulfilling and unique experience, spearheaded by Ms. Christina Aon from the CERASP, who also happens to be an RWA parent, was initiated to pique interest in pharmaceuticals through hands-on experience rather than traditional academic methods. According to Josh Y., a secondary V student who was lucky enough to be chosen for this program, "it was an incredible experience that taught [him] more about how medicine and culture are intertwined." I couldn't agree with him more!

Apart from the knowledge we acquired, the chance to partake in this internship alongside friends was an enriching and especially refreshing experience leading up to the school year.



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The Holiday Concert: A magic show beyond measure

By: Tu D.

The time has come: Lights on, instruments up, eyes on Ms. Purdy, show time! Mesdames et messieurs, presenting the Honour Band on December 14th, 2024 at the Holiday Concert! The chairs on stage are still empty and silence dawns on the darkness of the audience. Suddenly, a troupe of students in dashing blazers swiftly makes a grand entrance, each of them with their dear instruments, filing into the horseshoe formation of chairs and stands. Flutes, trombones, saxophones, oboes, French horns, trumpets - you name it. The homemade metronome, percussion section, and more. These instruments await the commands of their musicians and most importantly, Ms. Purdy. Dressed in her prestigious conductor black outfit, all eyes on stage are mesmerized by the dainty baton that she holds for this magic show. One could say that she procured it from Ollivander's Wand Shop, for all Potter-heads reading this.

We might live in a Muggle world with no dark magic spells, flying brooms or a talking hat, but you can't deny the fact that the Honour Band musicians produce music just like how the Hogwarts wizards create magic. Even Voldemort would surrender under these enchantments due to the complexity of the harmonies! By the end of the night, most of the spectators will have unlocked memories to share with loved ones from their enjoyable experience at the concert.

To the audience, this performance will seem almost too perfect, even effortless, but to the professionals of the Honour Band, this concert is the fruit of months of disciplined rehearsals. Driven by passion and fervour, the Honour Band plays together three times a week. It's no wonder why the audience is always blown away by their performances; their dedication shines through the night! Moreover, each member of this ensemble commits to several 30-minute sessions of personal practice each week. Kathie Wei, a trombone player and one of the leaders of her section, expresses her honour to be in the Honour Band. "The Honour Band not only brings me joy from playing my instrument, but also a sense of responsibility, teamwork and leadership."

They are not the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra nor the Montreal Symphony Orchestra; they are the Royal West Academy Honour Band and they know how to move hearts with their hard work and musicality. Come see them this December 14th in the Royal West Academy's Performing Arts Center, it is sure to be an unforgettable experience!



RWA Hosts Debate Tournament

By: Chloe B.

On Friday, October 18th, Royal West Academy hosted their first QSDA (Quebec Student Debate Association) tournament since the pandemic. Nine novice teams ranging from schools such as Villa Maria, Lower Canada College, and Selwyn House School — spent the day engaging in 3 thrilling debates.

The tournament would not have been possible without our lovely judges, debaters, volunteers, and of course: Ms. Holloway! She has been our excellent debate coach here at RWA for the past 12 years; this couldn't have been possible without her. Everyone I spoke to vouched that they were very impressed with how well organized the day was. Ms. Holloway stated that the most rewarding element of organizing tournaments is seeing her students in action — as tournaments are the best way to improve skills as a debater. We are so proud of everyone for putting in their all and wowing away the judges. A special congratulations to our Beatrice R. (Secondary 3) for scoring first place individually!



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Royal West Academy Foundation News

Dear Fellow Parents,

The Royal West Academy Foundation invites you to a **free informational event on November 7** to learn about how Royal West Academy is transforming its classrooms to better support the diverse needs and unique learning styles of our students.

This is a unique opportunity to see firsthand how your child's school is transforming its classrooms to foster engagement, creativity, and collaboration. You will also learn how these changes aim to improve student outcomes by accommodating different learning preferences.

Our guest speaker Chris Whittaker, co-coordinator of the Dawson Active Learning Community, will share insights on how active learning techniques are being successfully implemented in classrooms, and how these approaches can enhance student engagement and success.

We encourage all parents to attend and discover how this strategy will positively impact your child's learning experience.

[RSVP here](#)

Jesse Chaim
President
RWA Foundation
www.rwaf.ca




Innovating Learning Together:

AN ACTIVE LEARNING SHOWCASE

Join us for an Active Learning Showcase with a presentation by guest speaker Chris Whittaker, MSc, MSW, BSc, co-coordinator of the Dawson Active Learning Community.

Ph.D. (In progress), Didactique, Université de Montréal
M.Sc., Engineering, Queens University
M.SW., Social Work, University of Toronto
B.Sc., Engineering, Queens University



THURSDAY NOVEMBER 7 6:30 - 8:30 PM

ROYAL WEST ACADEMY
189 EASTON, MONTREAL WEST

RSVP HERE

EVERY DONATION GETS US CLOSER TO REACHING OUR GOALS OF TRANSFORMING MORE CLASSROOMS TO ACTIVE LEARNING SPACES. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



GIVING US ROOM TO LEARN TOGETHER

The Active Learning Classroom Campaign



Royal West Academy Home & School Association News



The Royal West Academy school store (RWA CO-OP) began in 2023 . It is a volunteer run enterprise, open daily at lunch, which serves as a second hand uniform shop, school supply store and swag/spirit wear boutique. This may be a store, but it is so much more! Students can volunteer on their lunch hour to earn ECA credits and referrals for summer job applications. Students create art pieces for decoration and signs for the store, they create "spirit wear" through tie-dye workshops, they express themselves on our "chalk-wall", they stock shelves, do inventory, work the cash, triage the donations, lead the merchandising of our display case, stock the vending machine, all while collaborating with a parent volunteer as well as their peers. Staff and students alike have been influential in what we carry and sell. From art pencils, locks, and science boards, to popcorn and RWA tuques, the store is more than a fundraiser for the school. It is a space where students can purchase items, recommend items, donate items, and be a part of their school store.

