Michael Chechile Appointed As The New Director General Of The Lester B. Pearson School Board

by Alisia Ambronczi

The Lester B. Pearson School Board named Michael Chechile, director of education with the Board of Education, as the new director general of the Board of Education at the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, June 8, 2015, in replacement of Robert T. Mills, the current director general. Chechile, who joined the Board of Education in 2008, will hold the position of director general starting this fall. Mills will continue his role as the interim director general until the new director general is in place. Chechile's appointment follows the announcement of the retirement of Robert T. Mills, director general of the Board of Education, after 20 years of service.

Chechile, who has spent the majority of his career in the educational sector, has extensive experience in leadership and administration. He has held various positions at the Board of Education, including director of professional development, director of administration, and director of educational technology. He has also served as a lecturer at Concordia University, where he has taught courses on educational technology and e-learning.

Chechile's appointment is a step in the right direction for the Board of Education, as he brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field of education. His appointment is a testament to the Board's commitment to providing the best possible education to its students.

Chechile's appointment is a significant milestone for the Board of Education, as it marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter. Mills, who has served as the director general for 20 years, has played a crucial role in shaping the Board of Education's policies and programs. His dedication and commitment to improving the educational system have been evident throughout his tenure.

Chechile's appointment is a promising sign for the future of the Board of Education. He brings with him a fresh perspective and a passion for improving the educational system. His appointment is a testament to the Board's commitment to providing the best possible education to its students.

In conclusion, Chechile's appointment as the new director general of the Board of Education is a significant milestone for the Board of Education. His appointment is a testament to the Board's commitment to providing the best possible education to its students. 

Robert T. Mills, Director General of the Lester B. Pearson School Board, to Retire

by Alisia Ambronczi

Robert T. Mills hasn't yet defined what the next phase of his life will be after all, but it quite understand- able after 42 years as a leader in the field of educational and public service, there may be a need to take a break – a sort of prolonged summer vacation in his case, which may be extended for a few weeks or even months. He has been a dedicated, hard-working leader, and believes that his retirement will allow him to spend more time with his family.

Robert T. Mills is a long-time member of the education community, having served in various capacities at all levels of the public education system. He has been a leader in the field of educational policy, having served as director general of the Lester B. Pearson School Board since 1998. Mills has been actively involved in the development and implementation of educational policies and programs, including the creation of the Pearson School Board's educational technology strategy.

Mills has been a strong advocate for the importance of educational technology in the classroom, having worked closely with the Pearson School Board's technology team to implement new tools and strategies in a myriad of ways. He has been a fierce supporter of the Pearson School Board's educational technology strategy, having served as the Pearson School Board's educational technology strategy leader since the program's inception in 1998.

Mills has been a respected leader in the field of educational technology, having served as the Pearson School Board's educational technology strategy leader since the program's inception in 1998. He has been a vocal advocate for the importance of educational technology in the classroom, having worked closely with the Pearson School Board's technology team to implement new tools and strategies in a myriad of ways.

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The students - Noah Bernaud, Jake Jordison, Lucas Reckles, Wendy Gagnon, Ryan Murray, Trevor Plocek, Zachary Richard, Justin Taylor-McPhedran and Alexi Weins - to come up with the mini-Putt Plus project that they had set up in the halls of the school board building in Derval.

“Entrepreneurial Spirit Alive and Well At Pearson Schools”

Entrepreneurial Spirit Alive and Well At Pearson Schools

by Alycia Ambrozuk

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It’s one thing to come up with an interesting project at your school – it’s quite another to have your project take first prize in a province-wide entrepreneurship competition.

That’s exactly what happened to nine Beaconfield High School students when they were presented with first prize in the Secondary Cycle One category for their entry called Mini-Putt Plus, a project designed to help students learn about a fun way to learn about positive and negative integers,” said Justin as people lined up to play the mini-Putt game made out of carpet, wood, plastic, figures and probably duct tape.

Maria Segura and Chris Riel-Landry, students at Westwood Sr. High School in Hudson, showed off the various events – including a Haunted House - held at the school and in the community in order to send books to students in Burundi where Westwood students had helped build a house and more, as part of the Bridge to Burundi project in Africa.

Westpark Elementary students Maya Oberman, Serena Totera, Samanacha Nathan, Michaela Nos and Shelly Allaby stood proudly in front of their recycling project that they presented to Ms. students at their Dollard des Ormeaux school.

Next to them, Edgewood Elementary students Siddharth Seshadri, Kyleen Mah and Breanna De Forest presented their Future Steps in Robotics display. And next to them, Lakeoise Academy students Markus Caswell, Luccas Francis, along with teacher Sherri MacCallum, showed off the handmade Christmas ornaments they hand-carved out of poplar wood – all part of a creating and recycling project.

Presentations were varied to say the least. Next at a Gardening Can Delicous by Children’s World students Madison Brown, Luca di Martino, Daija Jacobson and Olivia Luciano, Beechwood Elementary students presented Heracles a Play, a fundraiser directed by students Sarah Cassoll and Cassidy Mclean. Students at Verdun Elementary presented their Turning Calendar and Cards into Plants and St. Lawrence Academy students showed their Dress for Success project in which students bring in gently used clothing for others to use.

Student Cory Lafortune manned the Allion Elementary school presentation showing how students made sandwiches and brought them to St. Michael’s Mission in downtown Montreal to help feed the homeless. Another Allion project was a petition project created to protect the Trans-Canada Pipeline project and the building of a deep-water port in Cacouna, Quebec, a move which they felt would endanger wildlife, including Beluga whales. The petition was presented March 10 in the House of Commons by New Democratic MP Helene LeBlanc.

John Rennie High School’s resource Hayden Garden project – in which food grown at the school gets used in cooking classes – was on display as was the Mac Regin Shop by students at Macdonald High School.

A recycling and soft-drink tab-saving project in order to help finances the purchase of canes and wheelchairs at Mount Sinai Hospital was the presentation by Maple Grove students Seth Cumpanes, Maya Schmidt, Samantha de Luca and Emmie Ricardo. Springdale Elementary students Cameron Mclean and Iman Akrum presented Cha-Cha Chau, Our Way to Health and Happiness with cha-cha they made from cardboard tubes and seeds and mobiles made with positive messaging.

Beaconfield High School students Kayla Marchau, Amanda Fosier, Julia Driver, Emily Evangelou and Taylor Fintel presented the Jersey take-it, an attachment to keep your phone tangle-free. A marketing company has already expressed interest in their project. Beaconfield High School students Madison Smith, Hannah Roy and Charlette Cassidy showed their Believe Bubbles, small hand-sewn or hand-sewn hit balls that have been sent to an orphanage in Kenya as well as to the West Island Palliative Care Residence.

Riverview students Dylan Bochart and Lachlan Lemieux, Amber Forster and MacKayla Eglethorpe proudly displayed their hand-made Just in Case telephone and pad holders as well as their Kit- ten Mittens, designed to prevent cats from scratching furniture.
Organic Herbs A Natural Success At Beauty Academy

by Alycia Ambrociaik

When esthetics teacher Concetta Tina Mercuri taught her students about the theory of using herbs to make beauty and health products, she quickly realized they were getting a bit bored with a theoretical approach.

Theory is one thing, hands-on approach is another, Mercuri realized.

Mercuri thought her students would be more interested in the Food in the Face module if she introduced hands-on projects, allowing students to experience cosmetology in a realistic and concrete way.

She and her students started the Cosmetology Garden Project from scratch, planting seeds and placing them in the windowsill of her classroom at the Gordon Robertson Beauty Academy in Beaconsfield, all with the intention of growing herbs to make beauty and health products.

“Smelling, touching the herbs and creating facial recipes... built a realistic connection between the classroom and the esthetics industry,” said Mercuri, who has been teaching at the beauty school since 2010.

“It was so practical to have a garden right outside the school so you pick your personal ingredients and make infusions to apply in a treatment,” she added.

Mercuri said the creation of the herb garden and the natural products created by the students led to overall improvement, not only in the students’ attitudes and level of involvement, but also in their understanding of the module.

“Students were connecting to the module in a genuine way...” she said, adding that some students were so inspired that they created their own mini-gardens at home to use for making their own natural recipes for family and friends.

Some of the natural products created through the Cosmetology Garden Project include a pumkin sugar and spice scrub and pumpkin facial mask, soy mask with mint, cucumber and green clay, rosemary creamy milk facial and lavender toner, a tangy honey apple mask, a green tea and peppermint toner and even a make-up brush cleaner.

Student Athena Iaizzo said the class was her favourite.

“It’s amazing how natural plants have so many benefits for our skin...we made our own recipes such as masks, toners, exfoliants and even cleansers,” she said.

“Learning the benefits of different plants and fruits is so beneficial,” she added.

Today, the windowsill garden has grown to include a large garden outside the school and other teachers and students have taken note, Mercuri said.

“Days after the garden boxes were completed, I noticed students going outside for lunch... sitting on the picnic tables close to the garden,” she said. “They were speaking about the plants...and this was also happening with the hairdressing students.

Eventually, two teachers in hairdressing... asked me if it was possible to use plants from the garden to create their own hair and scalp treatments,” added Mercuri, explaining that the garden can be used for mutual projects between the two departments.

As well, said Mercuri, clients at the beauty academy have appreciated the natural products created by the students.

Mercuri said the herbs were mixed to create infusions for use during exfoliation and after a face mask to rebalance the pH of the skin. The fusions are also used to mix clay or algae masks instead of tap water.

“The clients love it, and we all realized that this was a nice touch that clients don’t get elsewhere... it was a way to stand out in their future clients’ eyes too and provide a sense of added value to their clients,” she added.

And besides face, skin and back treatments, the herbs have been used to make tea, for both students and clients.

“It wasn’t just tea from the store, but plants that belonged to them, that came from the garden that they took care of,” she said adding that students in a management class made tea from the garden for their clients.

“I was really happy to hear that...they were so proud to show and tell their clients about the garden... this evolved into great communication with their clients”.

Mercuri said the project would continue to grow.

“Hopefully students will create their own styles and find more ways to incorporate what we learned from the garden.”

Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s TLC Among the Best in CST Inspired Minds Learning Project Competition

by Alycia Ambrociaik

Out of more than 800 submissions from across Canada, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary school in Vaudreuil-Dorion made it to the Top 25 in a CST Inspired Minds Learning Project competition.

The school’s project was called TLC - So Much More Than a Learning Centre.

And although the school didn’t win the $50,000 grand prize, they did earn a finalist bonus award of $10,000.

Meghan Ladd and Brenda Bertocchi, resource teachers at the school which is affectionately known as PETES, said the money will be put towards achieving at least part of their proposal, which was to create a safe space in which each and every student is a valued member in a community of learners.

“With classrooms filled to the brim and staff working hard to maximize student success, the TLC room at PETES is a busy place – to call it The Learning Centre would be to sell it short,” the resource teachers said in their proposal.

“In TLC, integration aides work tirelessly to support students who need a little extra boost – as a team, we run fine and gross motor circuits, behaviour programs, relaxation time, or sometimes just provide a safe space and compassionate smile for a child in crisis. This is in addition to modifying curricula, literacy lessons and social and life skills groups, the more traditional roles of support staff in our board...”

The resource teachers said their dream was to create a multi-functional room where children can come to access support for their academic, physical, social and emotional needs.

The resource teachers said their dream would be to create a room that would be a place of academic and social integration, with flexible stations that could accommodate small group work in a failure-free environment, a place of movement where kids who need more physical activity can burn off energy to regain focus for the classroom as well as a place for crisis intervention, where students who are learning to manage their stress or anxiety could practice coping strategies in a safe place.

Although the school didn’t win the grand prize of $50,000 or the second, third place and category prizes of $25,000 and $10,000 respectively, they did receive a finalist bonus award of $1,000.

To see the contest winners and their projects, go to http://learningproject.cst.org/indexV2.asp
Med Students Offer a Recipe for GOAL Student Success

by Nancy Battet & Josephine Sciortino

Every week for eight weeks, they were dedicated. They gave their time, resources and energy to lead, teach and inspire students. Starting with the VIP curriculum, Todd Gatien, Bill Powell and Josephine Sciortino taught the basics of public speaking. They talked about vocal variety, body language and posture and the importance of speaking your truth. They also gave them permission to use their platform to speak about their dreams as a way to learn—seeing setbacks as a setup for success, as Todd Gatien always says. “When you begin a program like this, you never know the impact you may have on students. Sometimes you don’t see the fruits of your labor until years later. However, you can say with certainty that we have already seen growth in these grade 11 students from Karen Forrest’s class at Riverdale High School in Pierrefonds, Quebec.”

They also talked about the importance of failure—and learned that students can view failure as a way to learn—seeing setbacks as a setup for success, as Todd Gatien always says. “When you begin a program like this, you never know the impact you may have on students. Sometimes you don’t see the fruits of your labor until years later. However, you can say with certainty that we have already seen growth in these grade 11 students from Karen Forrest’s class at Riverdale High School in Pierrefonds, Quebec.”

The students at Riverdale were very fortunate to take part in the Med-Students-for-a-Day program. They have seen some remarkable progress in some of very shy students. Even the more confident and relaxed students benefited from the program as they polished their presentation skills. It was a very positive experience for us, said teacher Karen Scott. Nancy Battet, Communications and Partnership Liaison is very proud the program has gone so well and looks forward to the team working with both Riverdale and Beaconsfield High Schools in fall 2015.
One of the ways PEF has supported the students of the LBPSB over the years has been assistance with the numerous travel and registration costs of advancing to provincial and national level competitions after having won locally. Over the years we have helped sports teams, choirs, science projects, and debating teams.

This year, for the first time ever, an English School Board project advanced to the provincial level— an English School Board project, and debating teams.


June 3 – 18 librarians to lose jobs over provincial cutbacks. Gazette, West Island.


June 10 – 18 school librarians positions shelved. Your Local Journal.

June 15 – Impact costs of advancing to provincial and national level competition.

June 30 – Pearson School Board cuts 18 librarians in elementary schools.

July 1 – LBPSB holds official opening for new wing of elementary school. CTV

July 6 – Saint-Louis-Laval among 18 to receive cut letter. École VIVA Medias.

July 7 – LBPSB holds official opening for new wing of elementary school board. CTV

July 8 – Lester B. Pearson students awarded Tony Licursi bursaries at the May Gala in Quebec City.


July 12 – LBPSB board supplies a bus, fees, 7 of the 9 students involved in the project, and their 2 teachers, demonstrated Mini-Putt Plus and accepted their award at the glittering Gala in Quebec City. Helping their schoolmates develop comfort adding and subtracting integers in daily life, the goal of supporting STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math). Coming so near the end of the academic year, school board budgets for unexpected expenditures have been used up.

Some, but certainly not all, parents are able to afford such a significant fee themselves. PEF is proud and very happy to have been able to ensure that each of the students who did not have another commitment, was able to participate in this life changing event.

Have a Superb Summer and see you all at PEF GOLF 2015 on October 1st at Atlantide!

In the News:

May 16 – Riverside High turns 50. Montreal Times.

May 27 – Impact at half-time. Lester B. Pearson students awarded Tony Licursi bursaries at the May 9 gala. Your Local Journal.

May 27 – Teachers union mulls possible strike action this fall. Your Local Journal.

May 27 – Westwood Bridge to Beaconsfield project continues. The Suburban.

May 27 – Sylvie Pelletier, a John Rennie high school teacher, became the second woman in Canada to lead a Canadian Forces combat unit. The Chronicle.

May 27 – Sylvie Pelletier (John Rennie High School teacher), première femme à la tête du 2e régiment d’artillerie de campagne. 45eNord


May 29 – More cuts possible at LBPSB. May 29 CBC.

May 29 – No more school board elections, says Blais. Global TV.

May 29 – English school boards denounce government – proposed end to school board elections. The Chronicle.

May 29 – Pearson School Board cuts 18 librarians in elementary schools. Montreal Gazette

June 1 – LBPSB holds official opening for new wing of elementary school. CTV

June 1 – PEF supports students of the LBPSB. Montreal Gazette.

June 1 – Human chains protest at 70 Quebec schools. The Montreal Gazette.

June 3 – PEF awards students of the LBPSB. Gazette, West Island.

June 3 – Eliminating school librarians will affect students column by Mark Newshook. Gazette, West Island.

June 3 – 18 librarians to lose jobs over provincial cutbacks. Gazette, West Island.

June 3 – Schools alarmed by librarian cuts. Gazette, West Island.

June 3 – Ground breaking high school turns 50. Gazette, West Island.

June 3 – Opposition. Layoff of librarians is apt to hit hardest in schools in least affluent areas. Gwyneth Edwards, special to Montreal Gazette.

June 3 – No. Patrick’s Elementary gets 54.6 million expansion. The suburban areas.

June 6 – FETES looking for some TLC. The Suburban.

June 6 – 18 school librarians positions shelved. Your Local Journal.


June 7 – Saint-Louis-Laval among 18 to receive cut letter. École VIVA Medias.

June 7 – LBPSB holds official opening for new wing of elementary school board. CTV

June 8 – Velem no.1 in QMJHL draft. Joseph Velemo is a St. Thomas High School student. Montreal Gazette.

June 8 – Protest to keep librarians. CTV

June 8 – LBPSB librarians protest cuts. Global TV

June 9 – Lester B. librarians refused to be silenced over Quebec budget cuts. Global TV.

June 9 – Lester B. school taxes go way up under new plan. Montreal Gazette.

June 9 – Michael Chechile new director of the LBPSB. CBC.

June 10 – Can Quebec School Board elections be saved? Should they be? Global TV.

June 10 – Parents, students urge board to retain librarians. Gazette, West Island.

June 10 – Chechile is Pearson board’s new director general. Gazette, West Island.

June 10 – Last days of school – photos sent to parents and PEF reading. Gazette, West Island.

June 10 – Students celebrate end and beginning. John Rennie grad ceremonies. Gazette, West Island.

June 10 – Single rate school tax will increase tab for Montrealers. The Suburban.

June 10 – More cuts ahead at the LBPSB. The Suburban.

June 10 – Quebec wants schools closed by fall. The Suburban.

June 10 – English community groups launch study of school board electoral system. The Chronicle.

June 11 – Librarian cuts this school community hard. Your Local Journal.

June 11 – Quebec proposes cutting maintenance budgets of half-empty schools. CBC

June 11 – Letter: ARQALA responds to cuts of librarians. The Montreal Gazette

June 12 – LBPSB board parents protesta librarian cuts. CBC.

June 12 – English board worry about budget cuts. CTV.

June 16 – Sexual education to return to Quebec schools. CBC


June 22 – Montreal schools use standing desks, stationary bikes to keep students focused (Westpark and Allais). CBC.

June 23 – Grade 10 students, parents fretting over exams. CJAD
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Open to staff & parents of the LBPSB Community
Date: Saturday, October 17, 2015
OR Sunday, October 18, 2015
Time: 9:00 am - 1:30 pm
Place: Pearson Electrotechnology Centre
5000 René Huguet, Lachine

For more information, email workshopinfo@lbpsb.qc.ca or call (514) 422-3000 & ask for 'Workshop Info'.

2. https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/b2/69/a5/b269a50328337a2f99d2dadaf7189ed.jpg