

Youth and adults pitch in for school success

By Corrinna Pole
SHERBROOKE

For the next four days the message to stay in school will be emphasised as institutions under the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) kick off the second annual Hooked on School Days.

Under the theme "partnership" the weeklong initiative taking place in 14 regions across the province, is aimed at reinforcing the importance of staying in school.

Last year more than 160 schools and organisations in the Townships took part under Project PRÉE (Partners for Educational Success Estrie) from kindergarten to vocational levels.

While the ETSB has been boasting a decrease in the school drop out rate from 39.4 per cent in the 2004-2005 school year to 22.7 per cent in 2008-2009, the board has expressed a desire to continue their efforts to keep students committed to their studies.

To bolster student confidence to continue their education various schools started off by showcasing hardworking pupils and celebrating their achieve-

ments. Others encouraged their students with postcards or hosted school wide assemblies and challenging activities to motivate those who are less academically inclined.

Sutton Elementary students will don green to show their support for school perseverance and those who have not been absent or late since the beginning of the school year will be invited to sign in a gold book that will be left on display.

Using cards, Sutton students will also be letting their parents know what they have done or can do to help them succeed in school.

Waterloo Elementary will record their student's genuine thoughts on school mixed with scenes of school life for a film that is being compiled by the volunteer efforts of a community filmmaker.

"The goal is to have a truthful record of their best feelings about school and have this to show at the next assembly and talent show, so that the invited educators and parents can have a glimpse of the real priorities of these children," stated the school's activity description.

Highlighting the important role com-

munity members and parents play in supporting educational success, many schools will welcome guest speakers who will share information about the various vocations and professions available and the education required to pursue their dreams.

Two visiting acrobats will help the students at Asbestos-Danville-Shipton Elementary experience circus related activities followed by a discussion about the educational requirements for different occupations available in the circus.

Princess Elizabeth Elementary will take it one step further by encouraging students to interview their parents answers to the question "Why is school so important?"

Students will film the parents with the top three answers for a short video clip promoting school perseverance.

New Horizons Adult Education Centre will welcome the community at noon on Wednesday, February 16, for "Tell me a story". Students, many of whom are immigrants, will share their personal life story through various mediums such as art, dance, play, technology, and more to encourage others to return to school as an adult.

The event will be followed by a lunch with food from the different cultures represented in the school.

The Lennoxville Vocational Training Centre will open its doors all day to the public on Thursday, February 17, to allow them to explore the nine programs offered, view demonstrations and speak with teachers and students.

Images of trees took sprout in many buildings where members of the school community, including parents, were invited to write messages of encouragement on a paper leaf to be attached to a branch of the tree throughout the week.

Encouragement tree's can be found in the main entrance at Ayer's Cliff Elementary, North Hatley Elementary and Sherbrooke Elementary.

Twenty-two ETSB schools and centres will be participating in "Hooked on School Days" which runs from February 14 to 18. For specific school activities visit the ETSB website at www.etsb.qc.ca.

Parents looking for tips to help encourage their children this week are invited to visit the Projet PRÉE website at www.reussiteeducativeestrie.ca