

Annual Report

2020-2021



Western Quebec
Literacy Council

The Western Quebec Literacy Council
106 rue Front,
Campbell's Bay, Qc
J0X 1K0

Phone: 819-648-2150 Toll Free: 1-888-647-3112

Email: Info@wqlc.org

Web: wqlc.org

Table of Contents

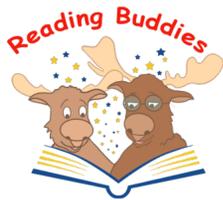


	Page
Funding	4
Word from the President	5
Board of Directors & Staff	6-7
Vision & Mission	8
What we Do	8-9
Adult Learners	10
Connect 2 Learn	11
Volunteers	12-13
Reading Buddies	14-15
Family Literacy	16-17
Outreach, Networking & Partnerships	18-19
Governance and Operations	20
Marilee Delombard Award	21
Credit Roll	21

Funding

Québec 

This document and our regular programming is made possible by financial support from the Ministère de l'Éducation et l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) through the Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation (PACTE).



In partnership with Solidarity Alliances, the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada

Entente de développement culturel



Québec 



Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches, letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights.

-Pauline R. Keyzer



Word from the President

The Western Quebec Literacy Council continues to support English-speaking adults, families, and youth to improve their reading, writing, listening speaking, numeracy, and other life skills. It just happened to look a bit different this past year. Last year, I talked about some of the changes that we were implementing to meet the ever-changing Covid-19 regulations and that continued this past year. While we were not able to provide face-to-face tutoring, we were able to provide online support to some learners. We learned that the relationship tutors and learners developed in a face-to-face situation is extremely important so, as we move forward, we are looking at ways to facilitate in person tutoring.

Our Executive Director, Michèle Gagnon and Program Coordinator, Krishnan Sundaram continue to provide effective programming in our area. Their creativity and flexibility have kept us moving forward. In June, Deborah Gauthier, our office assistant, retired after many years working with the Literacy Council. Thank you, Deborah, and enjoy your retirement. I would also like to thank Monica Dodson for her many years as a board member. For the last few years, Monica held the position of Vice-President. Thank you, Monica.

Our tutoring program, the tutors, board members, Michèle and Krishnan are our roots as we continue to support our learners. We have been branching out and launched two new programs in 2020-21, Computer Skills for Seniors and Reading Buddies. We tested best practices for teaching computer skills, developed training, recruited tutors and purchased 791 books to distribute to struggling readers across the MRC Pontiac and les Collines-de-l'Ouaouais. We will be moving forward with the knowledge gained from the Computers Skills pilot to continue offering computer help for seniors in 2021-22 and our Reading Buddies program is set to start welcoming tutors into schools in the new school year.

And so, our work continues. We continue to grow and reach new heights. Thank you to Michèle Gagnon and all the Board members for your dedication to the vision and mission of the Western Quebec Literacy Council.

Donna Cushman

President, WQLC Board of Directors

Board of Directors



Donna Cushman
President



Mary Ann Keyzer
Treasurer



Rick Valin
Secretary



Lisa Boisvert
Director



Brian Rock
Director



Rhonda Morrison
Director



Thank you to our Vice-President,
Monica, for XX years of volunteer
service!

Monica Dodson joined the WQLC Board of Directors in 2000. She has been Vice-president since 2020 (?). Monica is a committed community volunteer who will be missed around the WQLC Board table.

Staff



Michèle Gagnon
Executive Director



Krishnan Sundaram
Program Coordinator



Garrett Vekaryasz
Reading Buddies Coordinator



Happy Retirement, Debbie!

After XX years as WQLC's dedicated Administrative Assistant, Deborah Gauthier decided it was time to retire at the end of June, 2021. We wish her many, many great trips to her cottage in Nova Scotia and look forward to hearing about all the great books she will read by the ocean side.

The WQLC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of 7 positions. We welcomed two new Board members in 2020-21, Brian Rock and Lisa Boisvert.

Garrett Vekaryasz joined our staff as the Reading Buddies Coordinator from January 2021 to May 2021. Krishnan Sundaram managed tutor learner services, the computer skills project, and worked on the Reading Buddies Program.

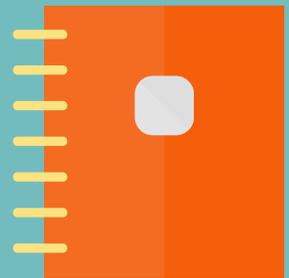
Vision and Mission ●●

The **vision** of the Western Quebec Literacy Council is to help and encourage members of our community to develop the skills needed for life-long learning.

The **mission** of the Western Quebec Literacy Council is to help English-speaking adults, families, and youth improve their reading, writing, listening, speaking, numeracy and other life skills through programs adapted to the needs of the individual. As a charitable volunteer organization, Western Quebec Literacy Council recruits and trains committed volunteers as tutors and support personnel. We are dedicated to promoting community awareness with sensitivity throughout the region of West Québec.

What we do ●●

The Western Quebec Literacy Council (WQLC) is a charitable organization that offers free individual lessons in reading, writing and mathematics. Volunteers are trained to tutor English-speaking adults on a one-to-one basis with the goal of improving literacy skills. We recruit students and tutors in the region of West Quebec—from Chapeau to Gatineau to Buckingham to Kazabazua and points in between. WQLC was formed in 1984 in association with the Western Quebec School Board. Since 1992 WQLC has functioned as an independent, community-based, charitable, volunteer organization.



Individual Lessons ●●



The WQ Literacy Council offers free, one-on-one tutoring to adult learners throughout the Outaouais. Meeting with a volunteer tutor once a week empowers adult learners to develop their reading, writing, numeracy and essential work skills according to their personal wants and needs.

The individual, learner-led nature of our model allows the learner to tailor their subjects and pace to their own learning styles and individual goals.

Adult Learners Receive Individualized Help with:



Reading



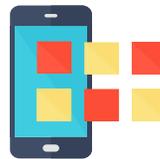
Writing



Numeracy



Communication



Digital Skills

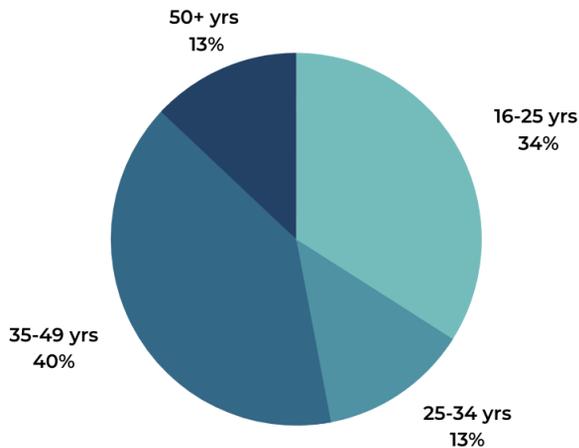
Adult Learners

The decision to move tutoring services online presented WQLC with the challenge of quickly adapting our services to continue the fulfillment of our mission.

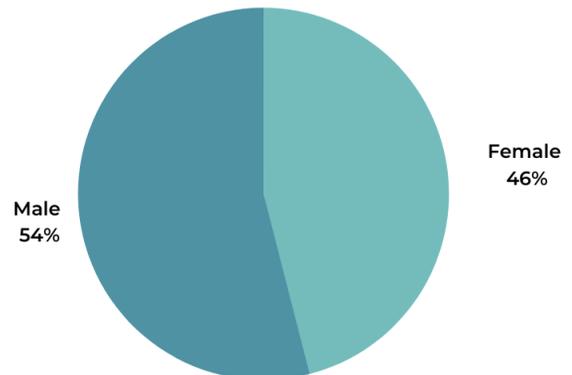
Reaching adult learners without the ability to meet them in the Adult Education Centers and other partnering educational institutions proved to be very difficult. The Pandemic revealed the stark contrast between those with computer skills who had access to the internet and technological devices and those who did not. It has shined a light on how much work is still needed to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all our community members can access services and improve their skills in the modern world.

15 adult learners were reached through one-on-one online lessons

Learners by age group



Learners by gender



18 laptops were purchased and made available to learners needing access to technological devices for lessons. They were also used in the facilitation of computer skills workshops.

Connect 2 Learn

The WQ Literacy Council received Emergency Covid-19 relief funds through the Federal government's Fonds d'urgence pour l'appui communautaire to help deliver much needed digital literacy services during the initial stages of the Pandemic. We offered one-on-one lessons and small group sessions to help people learn the computer skills they needed to stay connected in an increasingly digital world.



Skill Building

Zoom Workshop

We hosted a workshop to help people learn how to use Zoom's video conferencing platform.

Campbell's Bay Qc
November 19, 2020
9 participants

With financial aid from the Ministère de l'Éducation's Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation (PACTE), WQLC facilitated a pilot program to determine best practices for teaching digital literacy to seniors.

A series of 6 in-person computer skills workshops were hosted in Shawville, Qc on March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7, 2021. We hosted 3 computer skills webinars teaching email and internet safety on May 26, June 9 and 23, 2021.



Individuals received one-on-one digital literacy support.



Seniors were selected to participate in the Computer Skills pilot.



Participated in our Computer Skills Webinars

Volunteers

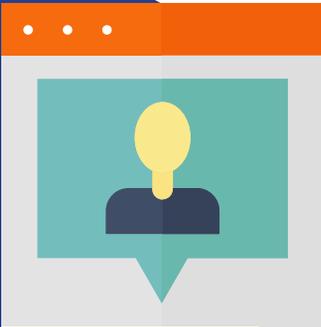
Volunteer tutors are recruited and trained by the WQLC to provide one-on-one lessons to help improve the essential skills of learners throughout the Outaouais.

We train our volunteers through an online platform hosted by Learn Quebec. This allows potential tutors to work at their own pace from the comfort of their home. We also provide regular webinar training on specific topics as well as continuous tutor support throughout the year.

The WQLC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and receives volunteer help for the facilitation of various activities from community volunteers.

We strive to create and maintain a community where volunteers feel valued and supported.

Tutor Training Webinars



- Zoom vs Classroom, September 15, 2020: 8 participants
- ESL Learners, October 13, 2020: 10 participants
- Word Recognition, November 17, 2020: 8 participants
- Reading Comprehension, December 17, 2020: 8 participants
- Setting and Reaching Goals, January 19, 2021: 9 participants
- Learning Plans, February 16, 2021: 7 participants
- Building Vocabulary, March 16, 2021: 8 participants
- Maintaining Motivation, April 20, 2021: 5 participants
- Critical Thinking, May 18, 2021: 7 participants
- Summer Social, June 15, 2021: 6 participants

Volunteer Appreciation

Our volunteers embraced lifelong learning as they quickly adapted to providing lessons online and the challenges that distance learning presents.

We sent them USB keys to celebrate our digital progress and express our appreciation during National Volunteer Appreciation week in April, 2021.



“Volunteering with WQLC has been rewarding. Webinars are stimulating and motivating. Coordinators are open and respectful. I feel valued by my student and the organization.”

-WQLC volunteer

- 567 Volunteer Hours Donated
- 11 Active Volunteer Tutors
- 20 Total Active Volunteers
- 1 Volunteers Recruited





Reading Buddies

The Western Quebec Literacy Council's Reading Buddies program is made possible by the *Alliances pour la solidarité*, in collaboration with the *ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale* and by the *Table d'Éducation de l'Outaouais*.

In January 2021 the Western Quebec Literacy Council launched a new program with the goal of helping elementary school students improve their reading skills while boosting their confidence.

The program also targets the families of struggling readers, providing them with tools and support to encourage family literacy.

Together with community partners, schools and trained volunteer tutors we have been working towards establishing this one-on-one reading program in Elementary schools in both the MRC Pontiac and the MRC les Collines-de-l'Outaouais.



Now Launching
A Love Of Reading

Community Partners

- St-John's Elementary School
- Dr Wilbert Keon Elementary School
- Dr S E McDowell Elementary School
- Onslow Elementary School
- Chelsea Elementary School
- Connexions Resource Centre
- Table de développement social du pontiac
- Table de développement social des Collines-de-l'Outaouais
- Centre d'hébergement de soin de longue durée (CHSLD)-Day program

Around the World Family Literacy Virtual Series

- Music from Around the World-April 10, 2021:
1 adult and 1 child participated
- Cooking from Around the World- April 24, 2021: 41 people reached on Facebook and 3 parents and 6 children participated
- Fantasy Lank Book Building- May 08, 2021:
2 parents and 4 children participated
- Explore Canada-May 22, 2021:
2 adults and 4 children participated



Family Support

WQLC organized 2 family forums to talk to the parents of struggling readers with the goal of assessing their needs (3 participants). We also launched an online survey to gather more data (5 participants). We developed family literacy tools for distribution and continue to seek out feedback in preparation for the 2021-22 school year.

Tutor Training

We created an online training for Reading Buddies volunteers, allowing them to learn safely from home and at their own pace.

1 info session, 4 participants

4 Tutors Recruited

788 Books For Home Libraries

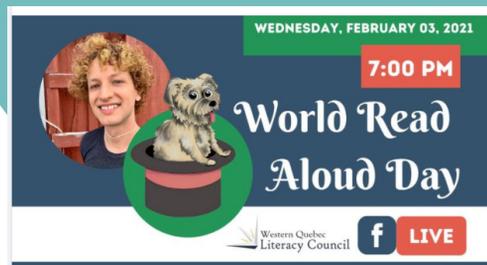
Family Literacy

“Family literacy focusses on parents, grandparents and other family members to improve the reading and writing skills of the whole family. By reading to children and engaging in fun literacy activities regularly, adults actively keep their own skills sharp and also help children improve their skills.” -ABClifeliteracy.ca

The WQLC works to promote family literacy within its communities. We encourage family literacy through interactive workshops, providing books for home libraries and by supporting parents and caregivers.

Online Family Literacy Events

- Family Sing-a-long with Phillip Holmes, January 24, 2021
484 views, 54 likes, Comments, and Shares
- Grow your Own Microgreens, Jan 25, 2021
99 views, 13 reactions, Comments, and Shares
- Music with Krish, Jan 26, 2021
158 views, 15 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
- Story Time with Pontiac MPP, André Fortin, Jan 27, 2021
567 Views, 39 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
- Crafts with Tash, Jan 28, 2021
76 views, 8 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
- Story Time; Let's Buil a Snowman, Jan 29, 2021
91 views, 4 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
- World Read Aloud Day, Feb 3, 2021
783 Views, 289 Reastions, Comments and Shares
- Bedtime Story, April 15, 2021
508 views, 52 Reactions, Comments, and Shares



Smart Art

Thanks to funding from the MRC Pontiac's Cultural Fund, WQLC launched a project to host 6 art based family literacy workshops. The Smart Art project hired professional artists to facilitate workshops to help demonstrate how literacy skills can be developed through the arts. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only 2 of the 6 workshops were hosted in 2020-21. The remainder of the workshops have been rescheduled for 2021-22.

Family Grafitti

with artist Linda Girard

October 10, 2020

Campbell's Bay, QC, RA Center

Attendance: 9 children and 7 adults

Paint Pour & Poetry

with artist Pam Cunningham

November 28, 2020

Shawville, QC, Community Lodge

Attendance: 9 children and 6 adults

WQLC developed a Smart Art handbook detailing fun and easy ways that families can intergrate art based learning into their routine.



All participants went home with new books for their home library!

Outreach

The WQ Literacy Council strives to promote literacy throughout the Outaouais. We reach out to the community in search of volunteers, to inform potential learners of our free services, and to establish partnerships with other organizations and educational institutions. With Covid-19 shutting down most of our in-person operations, social media became WQLC's primary outreach method.

Spreading the Word



549 Facebook Followers +197

3 Newsletters

486 Facebook Page

3 Media Appearances

93 Instagram Followers

43 Total Events

1 Website revamp

Scotia Bank Charity Race

The WQLC joined Literacy Quebec's racing team for this year's 2021 virtual charity race. Thank you to all who donated.

\$1,067 Raised by Team WQLC

Runners:

Krishnan Sundaram

Garrett Vekaryasz

Michèle Gagnon

Rhonda Morrison



Networking & Partnerships

Partners help us inform the community about the importance of literacy, refer clients, and roll out projects. By working with others, we are able to build stronger programs with greater reach. Thank you to all the wonderful organizations that worked with us in 2020-21!

Partnerships

- Connexions Resource Centre:
Itsy Bitsy Tot group (2 events 23 participants), promotion
- Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi Pontiac:
Financial Literacy Workshop:
Consumer Protection, 8 participants
- Western Quebec Career Center and Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi Pontiac:
Financial Literacy Workshop, 6 participants
- Hull Adult Education Center:
Learner referrals
- Pontiac Adult Education Center:
Learner referrals
- Centre Entre-nous:
Resource lending
- Regional Association of West Quebecers:

Committees

- Regional Access Committee for Health and Social Services in the English Language:
6 meetings
- Literacy Quebec
13 Board of Director meetings and committee meetings, as well as 8 other events and training sessions including Data and Research, Project Management, and Building a Culture of Philanthropy
- Corporation de Développement Communautaire du Pontiac (CDCP)
5 Board of Directors meetings
- Table de développement social du Pontiac
7 committee meetings
- Table de développement social de les-collines-de-l'Outaouais
6 committee meetings



Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there. -Virgia Burden

Governance and Operations

Board of Directors' Meetings

The Board of Directors met 7 times. All 7 positions on the Board of Directors were filled.

2020-21 Focus:

- Updating Procedures & Policies
- Diversifying funding
- Implementing new programs to serve a wider community
- Finding new project management systems and adapting to the changes brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic



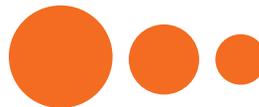
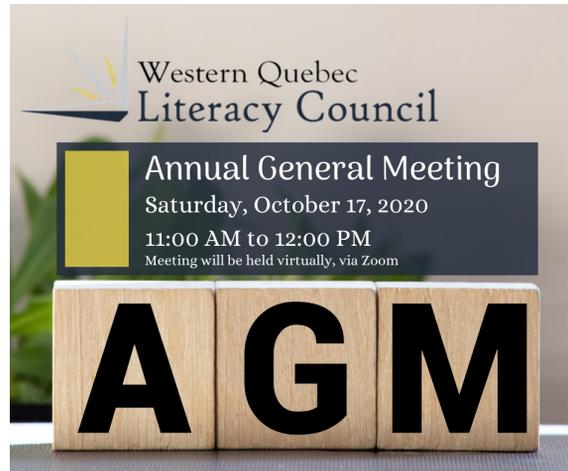
2020 Annual General Meeting

We hosted our first virtual AGM

October 17, 2020 via Zoom

20 total attendees; 18 members

- Invitation notices published in local newspapers, distributed through email marketing list and promoted on Social Media;
- Annual Financial Review completed by Dignard & Éthier; approved;
- Annual Activity Report presented and approved;
- Marilee DeLombard Award introduced.



Marilee DeLombard Award

In honour of Marilee, the WQLC has created a learner award. The Marilee Delombard award will be presented at our AGM every year to a learner who has demonstrated perseverance.



Winners

Rongrong Wang and Meng Chen

Dedicated to improving their communications skills so that they could be successful in their programs at the Western Quebec Career Center, Rongrong and Meng won 2020-21's award through consistent effort and hard work.

We Couldn't Do it Without You!

Thank you to all who contributed their time and skills and donated to our mission!

Richard Valin
Bernie Nunn
Peter Gauthier
Roland Belanger
Darlene Pashak
Charles Heaphy
Pat McQuatty
Kathy O'Neil
Louise Paradis
John Fulton
Joanne Gregg
Donna Mouzard
Lisa Boisvert

Donna Cushman
Monica Dodson
Brian Rock
Rhonda Morrison
Mary Ann Keyzer
Erica Ouimet
Deb Powell
Rebecca Hearty
Carole Valin
Robert Wills
Beryl Kerrison
Leila Nulty-Senf
Krishnan Sundaram

Danielle Lanyi
Natalie Filiou
Linda Girard
Pam Cunningham
Savons Coulonge
Joanne Lee
Kimberly Chan
DALs Linghting, Inc.
Martin Leguerrier
L. Monange
Haley Campbell
Caitlin Foy
Desiree Tremblay-Giroux

Larry Eskenazy
Rene Bruemmer
S Tache inc