



Harmony Elementary School's Educational Project 2023-2027

Harmony Elementary School

280 Brahms | Chateaugay J6K 5G1

www.harmony.nfsb.qc.ca

An elementary school of the New Frontiers School Board

www.nfsb.qc.ca

1. An introduction to our Educational Project

Harmony Elementary School is more than an educational institution, we are a family consisting of specialized professionals, dedicated staff, invested parents, and bright, motivated students, all brimming with potential. During the past twenty-five years Harmony has evolved into a vibrant school community offering engaging academic projects, a dynamic music program, challenging sports activities, all while promoting a strong bilingual program. We are proud of what we have achieved, but we also recognize that our school must always be adapting to the changes in our community so that we can continue to offer the best educational environment for our students. By setting goals, monitoring progress and regularly re-examining the learning experience, this Educational Project ensures that Harmony Elementary school maintains its commitment to provide the highest quality education.

This Educational Project between Harmony Elementary School and the New Frontiers School Board is written within the framework of the Education Act.

2. Who we are at Harmony Elementary School

History

- Harmony School was founded in September 1997. It was given its name to reflect its location in Chateauguay's Musical Village, North-East of where Highway 30 and Route 138 (Saint-Jean-Baptiste Boulevard) intersect.

Geographical Factors

- The city of Chateauguay is located on the banks of the Châteauguay River, south of Lac St-Louis. It lies at the mouth of the Saint-Lawrence River and is the gateway to the rural areas and communities of the Châteauguay Valley.

Community

- Châteauguay is an off-island suburb of Montreal, in southwestern Quebec. There are over 50 000 people living in Châteauguay
- Châteauguay's population combines French, English (30%), Indigenous people from the neighbouring reserve of Kahnawake and 30% from Mercier (Francophone population).
- Socioeconomic index ranking 6 to 10 (NANS)
- Economic Status Approximately Middle Class

Staffing

- Teaching Staff 24 employees
- Support Staff 23 employees

Student Body

- Language spoken at home: Majority are Anglophone speaking families, although we have a large population of students who speak either French at home or come from bilingual families.

- Harmony's student body is multicultural, consisting of many ethnic backgrounds
- Harmony's population is equally distributed between males and females

Particularities

- Harmony offers a bilingual program
- Recreational programs such as Physical Education, Art and Music are facilitated by specialists
- We offer services from a Psychologist and Speech Language Therapist
- Harmony offers a bilingual Resource program to support students with extra needs
- Harmony's Support staff can support the student body in both languages

Our Students & Staff		Pre-School	Elementary
Number of students		89	242
Number of teachers		6	18
Number of support staff		3	20
Number of non-teaching professionals			3
Our socio-economic index		6	

3. Educational Project Committee Members

Pascale Caouette	Principal
Sheila Shanahan	Resource teacher
Vanessa Della Valle	Cycle 3 teacher
Valarie Palardy-Sim	Cycle 1 teacher

4. Consultation Process

In the development of our Educational Project, the following consultations were undertaken:

Group	Date	Format	Notes
Teaching Staff	Feb. 2024	Staff meeting	Staff were asked to share ideas in writing
Students	Nov. 2023	Our School Survey	Students answered anonymous survey

Parents	Dec. 2023	Survey emailed	Parents gave input on educational objectives
Community Representatives	Jan. 2024	Meeting CLSC	School nurse suggested she give training on addressing eating habits with children and to discuss body image with senior grades.
The School Board	Dec. 2023 March 2024	AMC Meetings	Principals met to share ideas and commitment to School Board Success Plan

5. Some of our Challenges

Academic/Well-Being Challenges

Reading Comprehension

We have noticed that the percentage of students considered to be reading “at level” decreases significantly depending on the type of assessment that is used, especially in the older grades. When more advanced indicators of reading comprehension are used, such as making inferences, connections, and deriving meaning from a text, reading scores decrease. Example: The reading results taken from the PM assessment of this year’s grade 6 cohort when they were at the beginning of grade 4 indicate that 26% were reading below level. The PM assessment is primarily focused on decoding skills with minimal comprehension expectations. This result can be compared to the same cohort that showed 50% not reading at level as indicated by the GRADE exam at the beginning of grade 6. The GRADE assessment is much more focused on comprehension of reading and vocabulary knowledge. We can observe that there is a disconnect between these two assessments and the results they give.

Math Anxiety

Roughly one third of Harmony students in grades 4, 5, 6 reported feelings of moderate to high levels of anxiety in the “Our School Survey” of 2023. Although there are multiple causes for this anxiety, teachers have observed students expressing fear and anxiety when asked to complete Math problem solving activities. Anecdotal accounts from teachers suggest that the anxiety brought about by Math evaluations, particularly Situational problems, leads to students to be less open to taking risks and developing their problem-solving skills.

Health and Well-Being

Links between academic success and healthy lifestyle choices have long been established. When we surveyed our Harmony parent community, 77% of respondents indicated that they felt the education and promotion of a healthy lifestyle, including nutrition, physical activity and mental wellness, would be an important objective for the school to undertake in its Educational Plan.

Environmental challenges

Harmony Elementary school has been growing in population over the last few years. As a result, we find ourselves in an over-crowded situation, having to take rooms away from both the Art and Music teachers to add additional homeroom classes. We no longer have space for a technology room and the library is currently being shared with Resource and the NEST. As well, we are dealing with the same human resource shortages as the rest of the province, finding it difficult to obtain suitable candidates to fill both teaching and support staff positions.

6. Our Plan

Based on the data collected and our own observations, we have decided to focus on the following areas to improve student achievement:

Orientations	Objectives	Targets	Indicators	Results
To improve reading comprehension in both English and French	To have more students reading at level by the end of grade 6	Increase the % of grade 6 students reading at level at the end of grade 6 by 5% in the year 2027 from where it stands at the end of 2024.	Analysis of the data provided by the recorded reading levels using Grade exam and FSL Comprendre et Lire competency mark for grade 6.	
To promote a positive attitude towards Mathematics	To increase student's engagement in Math by reducing the level of anxiety associated with Math problem solving	Add a question in the 2024 "Our School Survey" specific to Math anxiety. Decrease % of moderate to high anxiety responses each year by at least 2%.	Analysis of the data provided by "Our School Survey" each year.	
To improve student well-being through healthy lifestyle choices	To increase students' ability to monitor their own lifestyle and empower them to make healthy choices for themselves	Add a question to the 2024 "Our School Survey" specific to students' perception of their own lifestyle habits. Increase their positive perception by 5% from the baseline of 2024 to 2027	Analysis of the data provided by "Our School Survey" each year.	

7. Sustainable Development

Harmony Elementary school is committed to our role of being responsible stewards of the environment by regularly implementing sustainable development initiatives. We recycle paper and plastic and we re-use books and other materials by finding them a new home through book sales and give aways. We are also piloting a compost program for food waste that will be in effect at the end of the 2024 school year. Every few months we donate lost and found items that have not been reclaimed to charity, and we have a collection of non-perishable food once a year for the Chateauguay food bank.

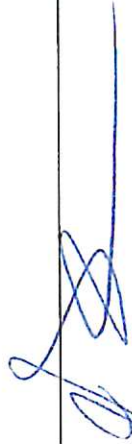
8. Alignment & Accountability

Our Educational Project is in alignment with the Commitment to Success Plan of the New Frontiers School Board, and the priorities of the Quebec Ministry of Education.

This Educational Project will be evaluated on a regular basis and the results will be presented to our community. We will analyse our results and determine the degree of success in the attainment of our targets. With the view to continuous improvement, this evaluation is the occasion to examine high-impact teaching strategies and to put them into practice.

9. Signatures

Signed at Chateauguay, Quebec this 26 day of 2024, 2024

	
Pascale Caouette, Principal Harmony Elementary School	Jason Shadbolt, Chair Harmony Elementary School Governing Board
I, Mike Helm, Director General, confirm that this plan is in line with the Commitment to Success Plan of the New Frontiers School Board, and is in conformity with our timeline:	
	