

South Shore Literacy Council's Annual Report 2025-2026

www.southshoreliteracy.org

279 rue Hubert, apt. 4
Greenfield Park, Québec J4V 1R9
Telephone • 450-671-4375
info@southshoreliteracy.org



SOUTH SHORE
LITERACY
COUNCIL

CONSEIL
DE LITTÉRATIE
DE LA RIVE-SUD

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| INTRODUCTION | Page 3 |
| Mission and Target Population | Page 4 |
| Service Area | Page 5 |
| Services and Activities | Page 6 |
| Board and Staff Directory | Page 7 |
| Funding Sources | Page 8 |

1. EARLY CHILDHOOD – AGES 0-4

| | |
|---|-------------|
| SSLC Mother Goose Program | Pages 9-11 |
| Healthy Early Years Program | Pages 11-12 |
| Early Childhood Material for Victims of Domestic Violence | Page 12 |
| Rachel Reads (NEW) | Page 12 |

2. PRIMARY SCHOOL – AGES 5-11

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Kindergarten Literacy Initiatives | Page 13 |
| Author Visits | Pages 13-14 |
| Reading Workshops | Page 14 |
| Peer Tutor/Homework Tips Workshop | Page 15 |
| Reading Week | Page 15 |

3. SECONDARY SCHOOL – AGES 12-17

| | |
|---|-------------|
| High School Transition Project (NEW) | Page 16 |
| Reading at REACH Secondary School | Pages 16-17 |
| Partnership with Heritage High School New Direction Program | Page 17 |
| Disinformation Workshop | Pages 17-18 |

4. ADULTS – AGES 18-54

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Care-Share Club | Pages 18-19 |
| Homework Help for Parents (NEW COLLABORATION) | Page 19 |
| ARC English Conversation Courses for Health Professionals | Pages 19-20 |

5. ADULTS – AGES 55+

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Personal Enrichment Programs/Life-Long Learning | Pages 20-21 |
| Intergenerational Programs | Page 22 |
| ARC Partnership for Senior Programming | Page 22 |

6. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| South Shore Vibe | Page 23 |
| Mother Goose Book Bags | Page 23 |
| Community Fairs | Page 23 |
| Social Media Outreach | Page 23 |
| Fundraising Initiatives | Page 24 |

7. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

| | |
|---|----------|
| Listing of Partners_____ | Pages 24 |
| Partnerships with French Language Tables_____ | Page 25 |

8. GOVERNANCE

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Board Meetings_____ | Page 25 |
| Annual General Meeting_____ | Page 25 |
| Conclusion_____ | Pages 25-26 |

INTRODUCTION

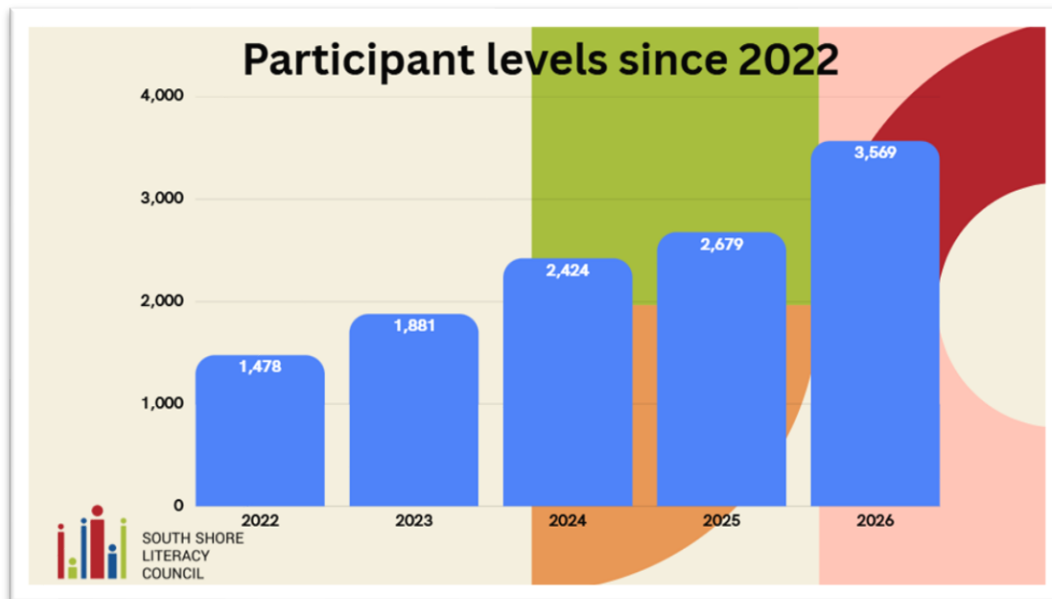
The South Shore Literacy Council is dedicated to life-long literacy. In 2025-2026, we delivered courses for early childhood, primary school, secondary school, adults and seniors. Annually, we manage 19 programs. Mother Goose, our pre-literacy music class, held 210 sessions for hundreds of families. We partnered with Montreal Diet Dispensary for monthly English-Language workshops on infant nutrition for the Healthy Early Years initiative. We hosted two sessions with Speech Pathologist, Amanda Pedriks, about early language development and multi-lingualism. We visited 1,400+ students with Canadian authors Lana Button, Sandra Dumais, Mitali Banerjee Ruths, Julien Chung and Mélanie Proulx. We provided in-person reading workshops for 19 classrooms and trained 96 student tutors. We provided bilingual micro-libraries for the community women’s shelter, REACH campuses for neurodiverse students and the Heritage High School New Directions program for students suffering with high anxiety. The CARE-SHARE Club for neurodiverse adults emphasized poetry, song-writing, meditation, art and videography. This year, we added to our repertoire in the Learn, Laugh, and Thrive program for adults ages 55+. We held bi-weekly workshops and offered age-specific curriculum on fraud prevention, consumer rights, medical assistance in dying, music, literacy and recording life stories. We continued our French-language partnerships with *La Concertation d’Alphabétisation de Longueuil* and *ConParle Famille*.

By the Numbers:

- The SSLC manages **19 programs** for lifelong learning.
- We provided **early childhood programming for 842** participants.
- We facilitated programming for **2,159 school-age students**.
- We provided learning support for **66 adult learners**.

- We delivered programs for **502 seniors**
- In total, we reached **3,569** participants.

66% of these interactions were **in-person**. **34%** of these interactions were **on-line**. We reached **890** more learners in 2025-2026 than the previous fiscal year.



MISSION AND TARGET POPULATION

The South Shore Literacy Council is a non-profit, English-language organization dedicated to offering free literacy programming. We offer literacy programs for early childhood, primary and secondary school, neurodiverse adults, adult students returning to school and adults ages 55+. We are committed to improving the quality of life through transmitting literacy skills. We are committed to building community through individual interactions and committed volunteerism.

SERVICE AREA

The Council's principal service area is the Shore Shore of Montréal (Montérégie). The SSLC provides community-based English-language services for participants in: (Listed alphabetically)

- Beloeil
- Boucherville
- Brossard
- Candiac
- Carignan
- Greenfield Park
- LaPrairie
- LaSalle
- Longueuil
- Montreal
- Saint Bruno
- Saint-Constant
- Saint-Hubert
- Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu
- Saint-Lambert
- Ville Lemoyne



SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Early Childhood – Ages 0-4

- The Mother Goose Pre-Literacy Program for Parents and their Young Children (ages 0-4)
- Early Childhood Healthy Early Years Project (HEY)
- Early Childhood Materials for Victims of Domestic Violence
- Rachel Reads – Online Storytelling

2. Primary School – Ages 5-11

- Kindergarten Literacy Initiatives
- Author Visits
- Reading Workshops
- Peer Tutor/Homework Tips Workshops
- Reading Week

3. Secondary School Age – Ages 12-17

- High School Transition Partnership
- Reading at REACH Secondary School
- Partnership with Heritage High School New Directions
- Disinformation Workshop

4. Adults – Ages 18-54

- CARE-SHARE Club for Neurodiverse Adults
- Homework Help for Parents
- ARC English Conversation Classes for Health Professionals

5. Adults – Ages 55+

- Personal Enrichment Programs/Life-Long Learning
- Intergenerational Programs (Grandparent's Week at Mother Goose)
- ARC Partnership for Senior Programming

6. Promotional Activities

7. Community Partnerships

8. Governance



BOARD AND STAFF DIRECTORY

Board of Directors 2025-2026:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| President: | Annie Beauregard |
| Vice-president: | Helen Noakes |
| Secretary: | Sarah Di Milo |
| Treasurer: | David Schurman |
| Director: | Caryn Shacter |
| Director: | Kevin Wright |
| Director: | Christina Miousse |



Office Staff:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Executive Director: | Rachel Wagner |
| Program Director: | Anne Mackay |



CARE-SHARE Club Staff:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Program Animators: | Patricia Giannakos Joel De Villiers Julianna LeDuc |
|---------------------------|--|

SSLC Mother Goose Staff:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Program Animators: | Laurel Hewitt Jana Johnson |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|



FUNDING SOURCES

PACTE - *Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation* (PACTE) is a provincial grant administered by the *Direction de la formation générale des adultes* (DFGA). The grant is designed to cover recurring operational expenses. It is the main source of funding for the SSLC.

ARC - Assistance and Referral Center. ARC has funded the SSLC specifically for our Mother Goose Program, Healthy Early Years Project and the CARE-SHARE Club.

CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre - *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux* in conjunction with the *Table de Concertation CONParle* provides funding for our Early Childhood Programming.

The SSLC likewise receives funding from *Les Éclaireurs* in partnership with the CISSS

LQ - SSLC is represented as a member of LQ (Literacy Quebec), and receives funding for participation in projects sponsored by this organization.

Financial contributions are accepted through Canadahelps.org from individuals or organizations in support of our work. As a registered charity, we provide official receipts for tax-deductible contributions.



1. EARLY CHILDHOOD – AGES 0-4

SSLC MOTHER GOOSE PROGRAM

The SSLC Mother Goose Program is the foundation of our coordinated literacy outreach for young families. It is a pre-literacy music program for parents and their infant children, ages 0-4, offered free of charge to participants. It's specifically structured to provide:



- Parent-Child Interaction
- Language Acquisition and
- Socialization

Professionally trained animators, Laurel Hewitt and Jana Johnson, model oral traditions of interactive rhymes, songs, structured play, story and dance. The animators invite parents to disconnect from their electronic devices and ultimately reconnect with their family. The material is uniquely focused on demonstrating optimal one-on-one time between parent and child.

Program Statistics:

In the 2025-2026 season, we hosted hundreds of families. We provide 7 weekly in-person classes. To maximize interaction, we suggested 15 families per group. To accommodate families identified as vulnerable, we extended registration as needed. The SSLC is associated with the Montérégie's CONPARLE Early Childhood table.

| | Fall 2025 Session | | Winter 2026 Session | | Spring 2026 Session | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|------------|
| Site | Adults | Children | Adults | Children | Adults | Children | Totals |
| Greenfield Park 1 | 13 | 22 | 10 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 88 |
| Greenfield Park 2 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 19 | 22 | 91 |
| Brossard 1 | 13 | 18 | 16 | 18 | 17 | 22 | 104 |
| Brossard 2 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 17 | 20 | 94 |
| St. Lambert 1 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 18 | 14 | 15 | 94 |
| St. Lambert 2 | 15 | 17 | 14 | 14 | 18 | 21 | 99 |
| St. Bruno | 11 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 63 |
| | | | | | | | 633 |

Quotes from Participants:

Parent-Child Interaction

- “The highlight for me was how excited my daughter gets whenever her favorite songs start...It has provided us with another tool to help when my daughter is crying or sad. My son has sensory issues so he gets very overwhelmed when she cries but being able to sing songs together for her that helps her calm down helps him regain his composure and improved his confidence. We did the program with my son 6 years ago and he still remembers and sings the songs he learned there with my daughter now.” Patrick/St. Bruno



- “When I was postpartum with my first son, I had an extremely difficult time adapting and socializing myself. Mother Goose allowed me to have a purpose of getting out of the house and doing something. It built my confidence as a mom and allowed me to bring song into our household.” Taylor/Greenfield Park

Language Acquisition

- “The program has truly meant so much to us. It’s been such an important part of my daughter’s development, especially in her language and social skills. We’ve seen her grow more confident, expressive, and connected with others in such a beautiful, natural way. Beyond the learning, it’s been a warm, joyful space where she felt comfortable and happy - and that means everything to us. As a mom, it’s been incredibly special to watch her light up during each session. We are deeply grateful for the care, love, and dedication you put into this program. It has made a lasting impact on both of us, and we’ll always cherish this experience. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.” Andrea/St. Hubert

Socialization

- “The program is a wonderful opportunity for parents to connect and exchange ideas. Each week, we notice how quickly the little ones grow and change, reaching new milestones in ways that feel both exciting and fleeting. They begin to socialize not only with each other—through smiles, gestures, and playful interactions—but also with the adults around them, building early bonds and a sense of community. I also appreciate the no-screen policy, which encourages everyone to be fully present and attentive.” (Greenfield Park 2)

The program is offered in English. (Our animators speak English and French.) Our allophone participants speak the following home languages: (Listed alphabetically): Amazigh, Arabic, Cantonese, Dari, English, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Italian, Korean, Kutchi, Mandarin, Pashto, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese

Participants: 633

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff Members: Christine Prince

Partners: ARC, St. Paul’s Anglican Church, *La Maison de la Famille de Brossard*, Mt. Bruno Elementary, and St. Lambert Elementary School

HEALTHY EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

Through ARC, the SSLC receives funding to provide health education to young families (HEY). We began the program in 2019. This year we focused on nutrition for parents and their infant children. We partnered with the Montreal Diet Dispensary (ALIMA) to offer monthly online sessions to our Mother Goose Families. The 2-hour sessions were animated by 3 registered dietitians.



We likewise collaborated with Speech Language Pathologist, Amanda Pedriks, to provide workshops on bilingualism in the home. As many of our participants are allophone, language acquisition and proficiency is a significant concern.

- Participants:** 28
- Resources:** SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff Members Christine Prince.
- Partners:** ARC, Montreal Diet Dispensary (ALIMA) Amanda Pedriks, SLP, SpeakAble Speech & Language Services

EARLY CHILDHOOD MATERIALS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

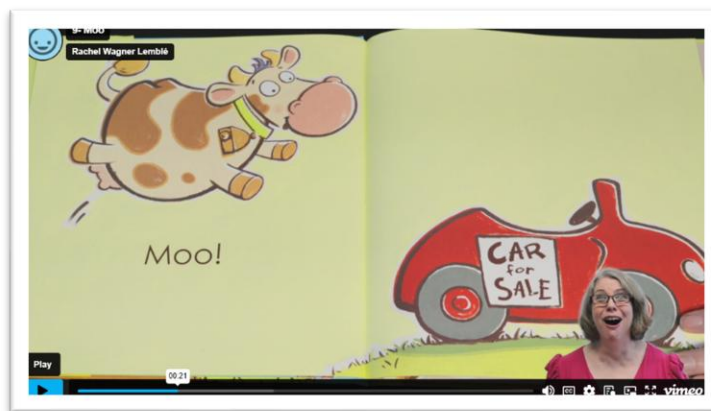
The SSLC continues our partnership with the local women’s shelter *Pavillon Marguerite de Champlain* to provide early childhood learning materials. For the 2025-2026 holiday season, the SSLC donated a mini-library divided by language and age to be distributed to families in transition.



- Participants:** Approximately 20 participants
- Resources:** SSLC Staff Member: Rachel Wagner, PMC Staff: Deborah Pearson
- Partners:** Pavillon Marguerite de Champlain, *ConParle Table de Concertation*

RACHEL READS

The SSLC has long-considered creating a site that captures the magic of storytelling in an online format. To respect copyright restrictions, we hosted the content on a password protected site. We partnered with videographer, Chris Alsop from Captura Video and filmed 9 stories. We decided that the pages would be cast behind the reader so children could ultimately read-along. Since the launch, the stories have been “read” 161 times.



- Participants:** 161
- Resources:** SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay
- Partners:** Captura Video

2. PRIMARY SCHOOL – AGES 5-11

KINDERGARTEN LITERACY INITIATIVE

| Date | School | Attendance |
|-------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| 04 Feb 2026 | Terry Fox Elementary School | 20 |
| 11 Feb 2026 | St. Lambert Elementary School | 11 |
| 11 Feb 2026 | St. Lambert Elementary School | 11 |
| 18 Feb 2026 | St. Lambert Elementary School | 21 |
| 24 Mar 2026 | St. Jude Elementary School | 27 |
| 26 Mar 2026 | William Latter Elementary School | 28 |
| | | 118 |



We visited 6 classrooms and 118 students for our kindergarten literacy initiative. We introduced the importance of diversified reading, multiple genres and why school and public libraries are essential. One student requested, “Will you come to my home for a play date? We can keep reading books!” ARC sponsored the initiative.

Participants: 118

Resources: SSLC Staff Member: Rachel Wagner, Riverside School Board Staff: Annie Beauregard, Michael Sitruk and Brian Peddar

Partners: ARC, Riverside School Board

AUTHOR VISITS



The SSLC set records for author visits in 2025-2026. Prompted by a Board Member who requested more in-person visits, we hosted local authors Mitali Banerjee Ruths at Harold Napper and Julien Chung at Good Shepherd. In total, they visited 22 classrooms and 388 students.

On-line, we hosted author visits for 59 classes and 1,096 students. Lana Button, a former actress, remains a consummate performer. We wiped away tears as she read her book, *One Can*, where the central character recognizes his family is “the one in need.” Sandra Dumais, an author, illustrator

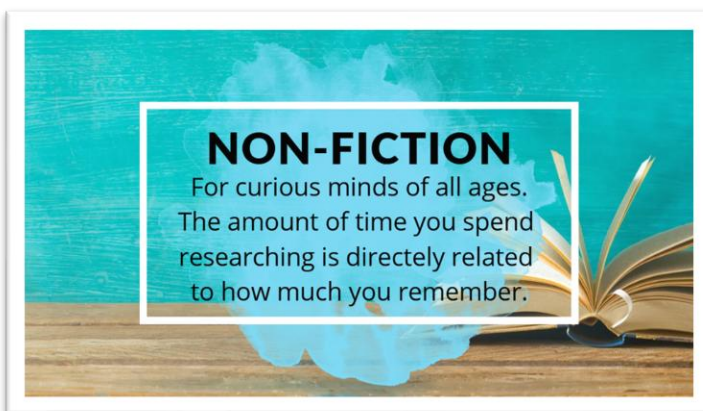
and art teacher, never fails to make us laugh in her drawing workshops. Our “angry aliens” should be framed. Mélanie Proulx, a postdoctoral student, read her book about consent for cycle 3 students. Lana Button wrote, “I am very happy that my books have won awards and have been translated into several languages. But I am most thrilled when I hear that my stories and my presentations have inspired a child, given them a chance to cheer, and helped them find their own voice.”

| Date | Author | Number of Classes Visted | No. of Participants |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 5 Nov 2025 | Mitali Banerjee Ruths | 14 | 265 |
| 11 Nov 2025 | Julien Chung | 8 | 123 |
| 16 Mar 2026 | Sandra Dumais | 11 | 209 |
| 17 Mar 2026 | Lana Button | 24 | 457 |
| 18 Mar 2026 | Lana Button | 8 | 152 |
| 19 Mar 2026 | Sandra Dumais | 12 | 227 |
| 15 Apr 2026 | Mélanie Proulx | 4 | 51 |
| | | 81 | 1,484 |

Participants: 1,484 Elementary School Students

Resources: Authors: Mitali Banerjee Ruths, Julien Chung, Sandra Dumais, Lana Button and Mélanie Proulx. SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, RSB Staff Members: Michael Sitruk, Annie Beauregard, and Brian Peddar

READING WORKSHOP



On 13 and 15 January 2026, Rachel Wagner visited 16 classes (296 students) in-person at St. Jude Elementary School and presented reading workshops. The workshop is adapted for multiple levels. We explore picture books, chapter books, non-fiction, and graphic novels. The students were surprised that each genre had wide crossover. After the workshops, Cycle 3 students expressed as much enthusiasm over non-fiction as graphic novels.

Participants: 296 participants at St. Jude School

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member: Brian Peddar

PEER TUTOR /HOMEWORK TIPS WORKSHOP

We expanded our peer-tutor program to an additional school and trained 96 peer tutors in Cycle 3 classes. Good Shepherd asked that the program be offered every year. Teacher and Board Member, Sarah Di Milo wrote, “It was amazing to see the participation and interest level, especially once the children realized how important something like this is on so many levels. It gave them a chance to reflect on the skills they have and how to positively contribute to our school community in different capacities. After the presentation, I had many students take the time to reflect on their own strengths and challenges, asking “How can I help someone else? What can I teach someone younger than me? What can I help a fellow classmate with? What do I need help with?”



Participants: 96 Students

Resources: SSLC Director, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff, Sarah Di Milo, Leigh Bulmer and Cycle 3 teaching staff at Harold Napper & Good Shepherd Schools

Partner: Riverside School Board

READING WEEK



Every year, we celebrate reading week with one of our partner schools. This year we visited classes at Mt. Bruno Primary School. We reached 57 students in 3 classrooms. We established an alter ego as “A Very Cranky Book!”

Participants: 57 Students

Resources: SSLC Director, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff: Michael Sitruk

3. SECONDARY SCHOOL – AGES 12-17

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION PROJECT



Over the years, the SSLC has noted that there's a disproportionate emphasis on transition from pre-school to kindergarten, but far less on the leap from primary to secondary school. We collaborated with Good Shepherd School to create kits including a parent-child guide for what to expect in high school, dry-erase boards, markers, folders and pens for all of their 6th

grade students. We included the following advice, **“Strong work ethic – In High School, you are expected to do your work independently and have less help and supervision. Things are hardest when they are new. Creating strong habits early on will make your entire experience more positive – if you can make it through the 1st year, you can do anything!”**

Participants: 42

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member, Cycle 3 Teachers at Good Shepherd

Partners: Riverside School Board

READING AT REACH SECONDARY SCHOOL

Since 2019, the SSLC has provided monthly programs for neurodiverse students at the Riverside School Board REACH schools. We visited Centennial Campus and provided programming for 5 classrooms. These students, many of whom are accompanied by a one-on-one assistant, are particularly attentive. The teachers are vested and the experience is always a highlight of our monthly programming. Our key partner is Maureen O’Connell; she preps the students before our arrival. Because she’s such an ardent advocate, the student follow suit.



Participants: 34

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member Maureen O'Connell

Partners: Seaway CLC, Riverside School Board

PARTNERSHIP WITH HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL NEW DIRECTIONS PROGRAM

The SSLC became aware of the New Directions programs in 2024 when we met the lead teacher, Jason Glowa. The program works with students who suffer from exceptional anxiety and struggle to integrate into a standard classroom. Mr. Glowa has created a literal safe space for learning. When we suggested a partnership to provide a classroom library for reluctant readers, he immediately accepted. When we delivered the books this year, students remembered last year's donation. One student took a handful of books and exclaimed, "Freaking Cool!"



Participants: 15

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Teacher, Jason Glowa

Partners: Riverside School Board.

DISINFORMATION WORKSHOP



In conjunction with St. Lambert International School, we continue to assist Secondary 5 students to verify their research and resources. 17 students attended. A teacher from another classroom peeked in. She expressed that every student should participate in this workshop. She questioned how much better the writing would be if students

were more conscientious of their sources. Our disinformation battle continues classroom by classroom!

Participants: 17

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, CLC Project Development Officer, Annie Beauregard

Partners: Riverside School Board.

4. ADULTS (AGES 18-54)

CARE-SHARE CLUB – ADULT LEARNERS

The South Shore Literacy Council has hosted a group of adults with varying abilities for more than ten years. Our group members have diverse difficulties including intellectual limitations, mental health challenges, and physical disabilities. Based on their collective experiences, the group voted to adopt the name “CARE-SHARE Club.” They reasoned that it reflected their individual concern to provide empathy and understanding among group members. Staff Members, Patricia Giannakos, Joel De Villiers and Julianna LeDuc maintained a weekly curriculum and practiced for an annual open house. This year we partnered with ACCESS adult education to provide a joint class.



Our lesson plans reflect our larger goals to:

- Improve Writing and Reading Fluency
- Develop Life and Social Skills
- Apply Strategic Participation and Leadership Skills
- Follow an Art Curriculum

The group collectively wrote the following song about feelings. Below is the first verse and chorus:

Feelings are like water
Skipping rocks is healing
Floating like an otter
Learning how to swim
Struggling in life
Finding strength within

Family by our side
Feelings flowing
Bringing us back to the shore
Feelings flowing
And when it rains it pours

Participants: 37

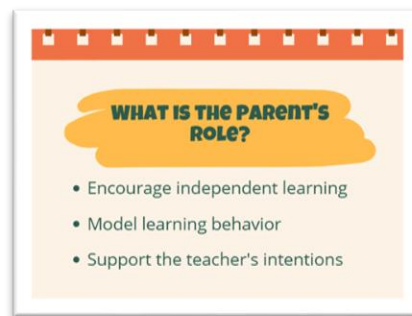
Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Patricia Giannakos, Joel DeVilliers, Julianna LeDuc, Anne Mackay and Rachel Wagner

Partners: St. Mary's Parish

HOMEWORK HELP FOR PARENTS

In conjunction with Harold Napper School, we hosted a night for parents who were interested in how best to help their children with homework. We often host allophone parents who are navigating homework in a different language than the languages spoken at home. The SSLC offered the following tips for parents:

- Encourage Independent Learning
- Model Learning Behavior
- Support the Teacher's Intentions



The question-and-answer period was lively. Parents asked how to improve their relationship with their child's educator and what were appropriate incentives. Parents inquired what was "too much" and how to encourage autonomy. 20 parents is a positive showing and we couldn't be more thrilled at their engagement and willingness to apply time-tested principles from a community source.

Participants: 20

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff: Leigh Bulmer

Partners: Harold Napper School

ARC ENGLISH CONVERSATION COURSES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

In conjunction with ARC, McGill University, CISSS-Montérégie Centre and the Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN), the SSLC has provided 90 individual English conversation courses for health professionals. These classes were created to improve health professional's ability to interact with English-speaking clientele. Students are matched to a tutor for weekly lessons. Anne Mackay's student, Lorena, stated, "Being able to practice weekly has given me new confidence to interact with people in sensitive situations."

Participants: 9

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Anne Mackay

Partners: ARC, McGill University, CISSS-Montréal Centre and the Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN)

5. ADULTS - AGES 55+

PERSONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS/LIFE LONG LEARNING

We have continued our Lifelong Learning Program with community members ages 55+. We have more than doubled our participation from 12 participants in 2024 to an average of 26 at our programs in the last fiscal year. We have rebranded the program, “Learn, Laugh, and Thrive” to differentiate the content from McGill University. We organized 16 separate events. We have included representative feedback from participants surveys after each workshop.



1. Fraud Prevention

“This has been extremely informative and enlightening – thank you.”

2. Musical Theatre

“A sheer delight in all ways.”

3. New Research on Parkinson’s Disease

“New research is fabulous as many of us don’t have access to journals with up-to-date info.”

4. Day of the Dead (*Día de Muertos*)

“Beautiful and informative PowerPoint. Info was presented with passion and great engagement”

5. Remembrance Day with Captain David Benson

“I was fortunate to meet this conscientious, caring, renaissance man”

6. Understanding Addiction

“Always great to learn new things. Thanks for arranging these meetings”

7. Holiday Carols

"Thank you again for another brilliant, informative and fun presentation."

8. Rights for Caregivers

"Thank you. It was excellent. We're lucky to have these workshops"

9. Canadian Suffragists (Part I)

"Great presenter - made the lecture very captivating."

10. Canadian Suffragists (Part 2)

"Every word was worth its weight in gold."

11. Civic Engagement

"Wonderful to learn about volunteerism and all its elements."

12. Consumer Rights

"I wasn't familiar with these price error policies, now I will be able to stand up for myself"

13. Author Steve Sheinkin and the Cold War

"Thank you for finding this amazing author and inviting him to speak to us. I had no idea that these documents were accessible to the public"

14. Finding Your Roots

"Excellent presentation – Shirley is such a dynamic speaker – gripping."

15. Medical Assistance in Dying

"Thanks for bringing this topic to our group...very useful and thought provoking"

16. The Extraordinary Life of Dr. Mitali Banerjee Ruths

"Every single bit was fascinating"

Participants: 421

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay and Board Member, David Schurman

Partners: Greenfield Park Community Centre, Greenfield Park Legion

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

The SSLC hosted grandparent's week at Mother Goose again. It's an absolute "keeper." Grandparent's Week was well-received and we had visitors at each of our 7 sites. We even had Great Grandparents.

Participants: 45

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, Anne Mackay and Rachel Wagner

Partners: ARC, *ConParle Famille* and Riverside School Board



ARC PARTNERSHIP FOR SENIOR PROGRAMMING



In addition to the Learn, Laugh, and Thrive sessions, we provided communications workshops to ARC's senior groups in Greenfield Park and Chambly. We asked questions like, "Why are we at our best when we listen for understanding?" The group was specifically interested in gender dynamics and the difference between a practical conversation to solve a problem and an emotional conversation where the larger goal is to be heard.

Participants: 36

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff: Therese Callahan and Tania Blood

Partners: ARC

6. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SOUTH SHORE VIBE



Brian Peddar, Host of the television series, *South Shore Vibe*, invited the Executive Director, Rachel Wagner, to speak about the Learn, Laugh, and Thrive program. The interview lasted 8 minutes and was broadcast every weeknight in March 2026.

MOTHER-GOOSE BOOK BAGS

The SSLC prepared and distributed 100 book bags to our Spring Session Mother Goose Families. Each bag contained promotional information, books, a parent-child reading guide, and English Language Community information from *Naître et Grandir*.



COMMUNITY FAIRS

The SSLC participated in the Regional Health and Social Service Partner Table (RHSSPT) community fair in June 2025. Our kiosk was situated on Old Greenfield Park's main street. The event coincided with a local festival to maximize traffic. Pre-eminently, we distributed informational materials and touted volunteer opportunities. In September 2025, we were again asked to participate in the St. Mary's Primary School Community Fair. This school is identified as one of the highest-need populations on the South Shore. We



distributed journals and

Mother Goose materials.



SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

The SSLC has transitioned our promotional outreach to social media. We have 600+ active followers and greater interaction than we previously accomplished through email campaigns. We have non-profit business accounts on Facebook and Instagram.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES AND CONSULTATIONS

In 2025-2026, we actively sought alternate sources of funding. We consulted with the following:

- Grace Dart Foundation – We applied for funding for our Learn, Laugh, and Thrive program.
- Zellers Family Foundation – The SSLC applied for book funding through Zeller’s.
- Regional Development Network – The SSLC has requested funding from RDN to sustain the Care-Share Program.
- Our contract has been renewed with *Les Éclaireurs* for the Learn, Laugh, and Thrive Initiative
- We received 18k from private funders in this fiscal year.
- We met with our representative, Isabelle Poulet, from the Québec National Assembly to discuss augmenting our funding from the Ministry of Education to match parallel French-Language organizations.

7. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

LISTING OF PARTNERS

We have continued all of our partnerships from previous years. Principal partners include (listed alphabetically):

ARC - Assistance and Referral Center

CAL – *Concertation Alphabétisation Longueuil*

CHSSN – Community Health and Social Services Network

CISSS – *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux*

CONPARLE – Early Childhood *Table de Concertation*

GPKC – Greenfield Park Collective/*Collectif*

FHL – Fraser-Hickson Library

LQ – Literacy Québec

MEPEC – Montérégie East Partnership for the English-Speaking Community

MFDB – *Maison de la Famille de Brossard*

RSB - Riverside School Board

SRM – Senior’s Respite Montérégie

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FRENCH LANGUAGE TABLES:

The SSLC continues our partnerships with *ConParle* and *Concertation Alphabétisation Longueuil*. CAL is a group of 6 literacy councils. It is the ultimate opportunity to exchange best practices, collaborate on mutual projects and represent literacy needs and funding requests collectively for the Longueuil region. The *Conparle* table includes multiple opportunities to participate on committees. This year, the SSLC participated in meetings for school readiness and in the coordination committee’s initiative to decrease screen usage during early childhood.

8. GOVERNANCE

BOARD MEETINGS

The SSLC held 9 board meetings in 2025-2026. Our Board of Directors is comprised of 7 members.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The SSLC held our Annual General Meeting via Zoom on 26 June 2025. There were 18 participants. The SSLC Director presented the annual report, the Treasurer gave our financial standing and the slate of directors was approved. This year our AGM will be held in-person. We are expecting 40+ participants.

CONCLUSION

The South Shore Literacy Council has had another eventful year. In 2025-2026, we again surpassed records. We provided services for 890 more participants than the previous year. (In FY 2022-2023, we reached 1,478 compared to 3,569 in FY 2025-26.) We achieved this through a concentration on live programming – 2/3 of our programs were in-person. As always, we accomplished this with a conservative budget, multifunctional staff and extensive consultations to establish diversified funding structures.

Our favorite feedback this year was from the Learn, Laugh, and Thrive program, “Every word was worth its weight in gold.” It represents the literacy rich environment we are growing from improvised earth.

We recognize our Board, our Staff, our partners, funders and participants as integral to our forward movement as the South Shore Literacy completes its 46th year on a continued upward trajectory.

