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## THE CITÉ-ÉCOLE, AT THE HEART OF ITS COMMUNITY

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ISSUE: Refocusing on youth

### ITINERARY 1A

Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2013

Location: Louis-Saint-Laurent High School

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## PROMOTERS

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Claude Giguère, Director, Louis-Saint-Laurent HS | E-mail: [claud.giguere@cshc.qc.ca](mailto:claud.giguere@cshc.qc.ca)

Renée-Claude Leroux, Community Organizer, Louis-Saint-Laurent HS | E-mail: [renee-claude.leroux@cshc.qc.ca](mailto:renee-claude.leroux@cshc.qc.ca)

Audrey Perron-Breault, Prime Minister, Student Parliament of the Louis-Saint-Laurent Cité-École

Louis-Philippe Tanguay, Minister of Communications, Student Parliament of the Louis-Saint-Laurent Cité-École

### **Presentation of the issue:**

The Louis-Saint-Laurent High School is part of the Haut-Saint-François territory, in which 11 of the 14 municipalities have a high deprivation index and the highest dropout rate in the Eastern Townships. 85% of its workforce resides outside the MRC; consequently, they have little knowledge of the environment. The young people have a very weak sense of belonging to their community. 25% of those who completed grade school leave for private or public schools in Sherbrooke. There is no college or university in the territory, so the young people are forced to leave their communities to pursue their studies, and few return once their studies are completed.

### **Project description:**

The project aims to make the school an institution integrated into the community and through which the young people can participate in all the different aspects of the community life. This project is a rural laboratory. The first step is for the Louis-Saint-Laurent High-School to adopt a structure and facilities that reflect those of the municipality. Thus, the students, secretarial offices and student council transform respectively into the citizens, the mayor and the Youth Council. On the one hand, the student integrates more easily the concepts of the business world, of social affairs and recreation, as well as that of the community. And on the other hand, the student has the opportunity to become actively involved in the community. For example, by volunteering in community organizations. The objective is to improve academic achievement, the sense of belonging and the long-term participation to ensure succession for the community. Moreover, we give the teachers the tools necessary to integrate socioeconomic data of the territory in their courses.

The Cité-École Project is for the entire community. In order to encourage parent participation, some municipalities will hold report card distribution sessions. The school projects are presented in the community newspapers. Collaboration has also been developed with the municipality administrations that now offer scholarships to recognize graduating students.

The project objectives are:

- increase the retention of young people within the MRC territory of Haut-Saint-François;
- attract new families and maintain existing ones;
- strengthen the sense of belonging, the social fabric and solidarity;
- create a new social engagement and civic participation mentality;
- form a volunteer succession and facilitate the emergence of young leaders;
- revitalize and improve the quality of life in rural areas;
- develop a shared mentality on the importance of education and development of rural communities;
- develop a regional solution for better educational success, including academic achievement, skills and social integration through active participation among young people within their communities.

Here are the steps taken so far:

- workforce mobilization;
- hiring of a community organizer;
- establishing a monitoring committee composed of students, teachers, community organizations and the school management. From this committee, two sub-committees were formed: one for volunteers and one on knowledge about the environment;
- creating a research committee composed of a team of researchers, the school management and teachers;
- drafting of an action plan;
- Follow-up.

**The key elements to remember according to the promoters:**

- environment approach;
- receptive school management;
- mobilization of personnel and of the community;
- collaboration of a significant member of staff with the teachers, parents and students;
- hiring of a community organizer;
- establishment of a monitoring committee composed of students, teachers, community organizations and the school management;
- creation of a research committee composed of a team of researchers, the school management and teachers;
- succession planning.

## RESEARCHERS

Isabelle Lacroix, University of Sherbrooke | E-mail: [isabelle.lacroix@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:isabelle.lacroix@usherbrooke.ca)

Julie Myre-Bisaillon, University of Sherbrooke | E-mail: [julie.myre.bisaillon@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:julie.myre.bisaillon@usherbrooke.ca)

### Summary of Isabelle Lacroix's presentation:

Isabelle Lacroix presents the preliminary results of her research on the Louis-Saint-Laurent Cité-École. The objectives of her research are to:

- identify the benefits (uncomplicated and challenging) of the Cité-École Project;
- document the implementation process;
- create the tools to support the transfer of this project.

We invite you to consult the PowerPoint presentation by Mrs. Lacroix to discover the preliminary results.

### The key points to remember suggested by Isabelle Lacroix:

- committed case managers;
- resources;
- urgent needs and a broad mobilization act as facilitators.

### Summary of Julie Myre-Bisaillon's presentation:

Mrs. Myre-Bisaillon presents the preliminary results from the work that aimed to support high-school teachers in testing situations of multidisciplinary teaching and learning, for which the contents were inspired by the communities, and to assess the impact on the students.

Mrs. Myre-Bisaillon invited Sophie Desrochers, a teacher, to relate her own experience to the group.

### The key elements to remember according to Julie Myre-Bisaillon:

- it seems that the school is not yet considered as a positive living environment by the students; we should be concerned about this and about their "low" confidence in their abilities;
- academically, although there has been some very positive changes with the teachers, many challenges remain and we believe that ownership of the environment can be achieved through educational projects;
- there is something to be developed regarding the different approaches for boys, also following the grade-school projects;
- we must continue to examine the relationship between the teaching practices of the teachers (what happens in terms of discipline in the classroom) and student achievements, something which has not been done a lot in Quebec;
- bring down disciplinary silos.

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## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

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**NOTE: All linked documents (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) are only available in their original French version.**

- PowerPoint from the Louis-Saint-Laurent Cité-École
- PowerPoint from Isabelle Lacroix, Sherbrooke University
- PowerPoint from Julie Myre-Bisaillon, Sherbrooke University
- Video of the "Grand Prix ruralité 2013" - Tribute to Mr. Charles Labrie