

## **Groundbreaking at Kells**

#### **Middle School Construction Underway**

We are thrilled to report that the demolition has started for our middle school expansion. It was a snowy Montreal day and the backhoes digging away were a welcome sight; the evidence of our expansion plans coming to fruition.

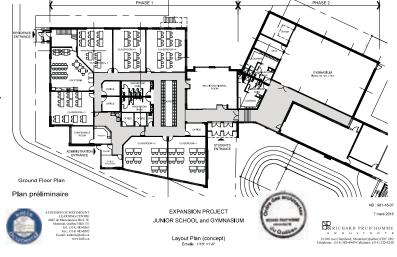
Kells Middle School building is set to be ready for Fall 2017. The demolition is in progress and construction will begin in the spring.

The project will be completed in two phases; the gymnasium will eventually unify our current elementary location with the new middle school building.

Students and staff will occupy the new space, which will include six classrooms, a cafeteria, and a science lab.

All classrooms and spaces will feature smartboards, high-definition projectors, and videoconferencing capabilities. A signature feature of the building will be large flexible spaces with collaborative learning classrooms.

By Lina Zavaglia



#### Middle School Program

## A Pivotal Time in Social and Academic Development

Kells Academy was excited by the prospect of acquiring the property attached to the elementary school, because we saw this as a chance to start a new concept: middle school. We had the idea of developing a program that would focus on social and emotional learning with a small class size in a smaller setting.

Kells middle school is designed to offer a unique opportunity for exploration and greater independence while still nurturing a sense of community. As students progress from elementary to high school, the work becomes more challenging, assignments take longer to complete, and the demands for self-reliance intensify. This transition for most students can be daunting and negatively impact on students' development. We are now aware that early adolescence is a time of heightened brain plasticity, giving educators the opportunity to work on non-cognitive as well as cognitive skills.

We also realize that self regulation, the ability to exercise control over feelings, thoughts and behavior turns out to be a stronger predictor of success in the classroom than talent, test scores, or intelligence. Many studies have also confirmed that exercise is one of the most important contributors to healthy brain development.

In our nurturing environment with an emphasis on community building, our students will benefit from increased motivation, social competence, emotional regulation, and competent decision making. With a slower progression to more homework and the opportunity to improve academic performance, we plan to fully prepare our students for high school.

#### Some of the beneficial programs that we plan to offer at the Middle School include:

**KEYS-Support:** At Kells Academy, we believe in creating the best environment for your child's individual success. As such, we are proud to introduce the KEYS (Kells Education for Your Success) Centre. The goal of the KEYS Centre is to ensure that the distinct learners of the Kells community get the support that they need. KEYS staff work with students, teachers, and parents to ensure that the educational and social needs of each child is best supported using research based practices and digital tools. This individualized pathway approach aims to ensure that each student earns a secondary school diploma and transitions to postsecondary education with confidence and strength.

**Advisory Program:** Each day, students will have an advisory period where they will meet with the same staff member in a small group. This is an opportunity to discuss topics of concern or issues. This allows students to form a meaningful relationship with a staff member while interacting with a peer group.

**Technology:** The goal of the technology program is twofold.

- 1) To improve educational outcomes and help students attain their highest learning potential.
- 2) Empower students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt to rapidly evolving technologies in an increasingly digital world.

**Small Classes:** In classes of about 15 students, a differentiated program is designed to meet the needs of the individual student. Enrichment and remediation are integrated in daily lesson plans.

**French:** At each grade, two or three programs are offered allowing students to learn within their own competency level. Programs promote an understanding and appreciation not only of the language, but of the cultural values of the society in which we live. Students may also elect to study other subjects in French, further enriching the experience.

**Explorations/Flex Program:** This program complements the school's wide range of extracurricular activities and allows students, at all levels, to pursue their individual interests outside of the regular school curriculum. Students can select from a dozen courses that range from the arts to the academics.

**Courses Offered:** Coding, Ceramics, Intro to Art, Film Production, Robotics, Spanish, Amnesty International, Chess, Art of Listening, Yoga, Soccer, Cinema and Film Studies, Dance, Crochet/Knitting.

By Marla Perlman



#### **Our Middle School Principal**

#### A Kells Pearl

Marla Perlman joined Kells Academy in 2002 and was named elementary principal in 2004. After receiving a Bachelor of Education at McGill University, Mrs. Perlman completed a Master's degree in Psychopedagogy at the University of Ottawa. She was published in the esteemed education journal, The Roeper Review. Her philosophy of teaching and learning is well-matched to the individualized student-centred approach that is unique to Kells.

Mrs. Perlman has established a peaceful and nurturing school environment wherein every student's strengths and talents are both celebrated and cultivated. She ensures that Kells remains at the forefront of technology integration and constantly strives to foster opportunities for exploration, creativity, and critical thinking to complement a rigorous academic program.

Recognizing the value of global and local citizenship education, as well as environmental awareness, Mrs. Perlman has implemented a number of forward-thinking programs at Kells. Mrs. Perlman continues to promote innovative, collaborative, and progressive practices, ultimately preparing Kells students to become the confident leaders of tomorrow.



Mrs. Perlman eagerly anticipates the opportunity to implement these successful initiatives when she extends her leadership role to the new Kells Middle School in September 2017.

By Irene Woods





### Admirable Philanthropy for Haiti

#### **Kells Student Council Shines**

The holiday season at Kells Academy was a busy time of the year. The students exemplified a great amount of compassion and drive, collecting donations for people in Haiti. At Kells, we feel that it is of utmost importance to give back to the community as well as help others around the world who are less fortunate. The student council quickly got to work and organized a school wide free dress day. They were able to reach their goal of raising \$400, and as an extra bonus, the school matched the \$400, resulting in a total of \$800 being sent to Haiti! Kells Academy students feel passionately about helping others and it was a great honor to contribute to an important cause.

By Jamie Rubenovitch

#### A Taste of Mexican Culture

#### **Spanish Flex**

Spanish is one of the many engaging courses offered in our Flex program. Students are not only introduced to the Spanish language, but are also provided with the opportunity to learn about various Spanish speaking countries that are rich with cultural traditions.

Dia de los Muertos was one of the interesting festivals that we examined. It is a Mexican tradition that coincides with Halloween and translates to 'Day of the Dead'. Despite its name, it is not seen as a sad holiday, but as a celebration of the lives of loved ones who have passed away. Although it originated in Mexico, it is now celebrated in several countries across Latin America. Families create altars for their loved ones adorned with flowers and offerings of their favourite foods. Traditional food is also made during this time such as a typical bread called Pan de Muertos. We were very excited to discover that our local Cafe 92, in front of Trenholme Park, is owned by a Mexican family who bake the traditional pan de muertos at this time of year. For our final Flex class, off we went on an outing to the cafe to sample the bread and put our speaking skills into practice.



Students ordered their drinks and the traditional bread in Spanish. It was similar to a typical brioche flavoured with oranges; the students thought it was delicious. The waitress explained in Spanish that the design on the bread was of bones or tears in honour of those who had died.

This experience of putting classroom knowledge into practice and being able to taste the bread that we had learned about, was a beneficial real-life experience for the students. We feel fortunate to have a little taste of Mexico right on our doorstep.

By Emily Marosi



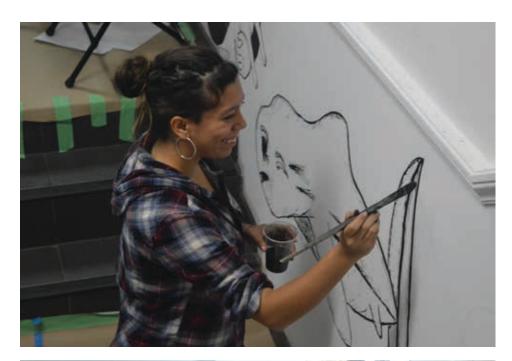




## Kells Gets Creative All Together

On November 18th, En Masse, a team of art educators and emerging professional artists, came to Kells to support us in painting the student entrance. Their goal is to bring educational institutions and talented local artists together to cultivate artistic expression and encourage collaborative efforts at all community levels.

A group of Ms. Rubenovitch's visual arts students were selected to participate in the creation of a mural. The students worked all day alongside three Montreal artists from the art collective. En Masse, a group based in Montreal, is best known for their large-scale black and white murals. The collective is now comprised of over 250 artists whose work can be seen internationally, and most notably in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The three professionals provided inspiration to fuel ideas for the mural and gave a brief lesson explaining how to work collaboratively with other artists. The students worked as a team to complete a gorgeous mural. Great fun was had by all participants and they are very proud of their amazing artistic expressions. By Jamie Rubenovitch









### **TERRY FOX**



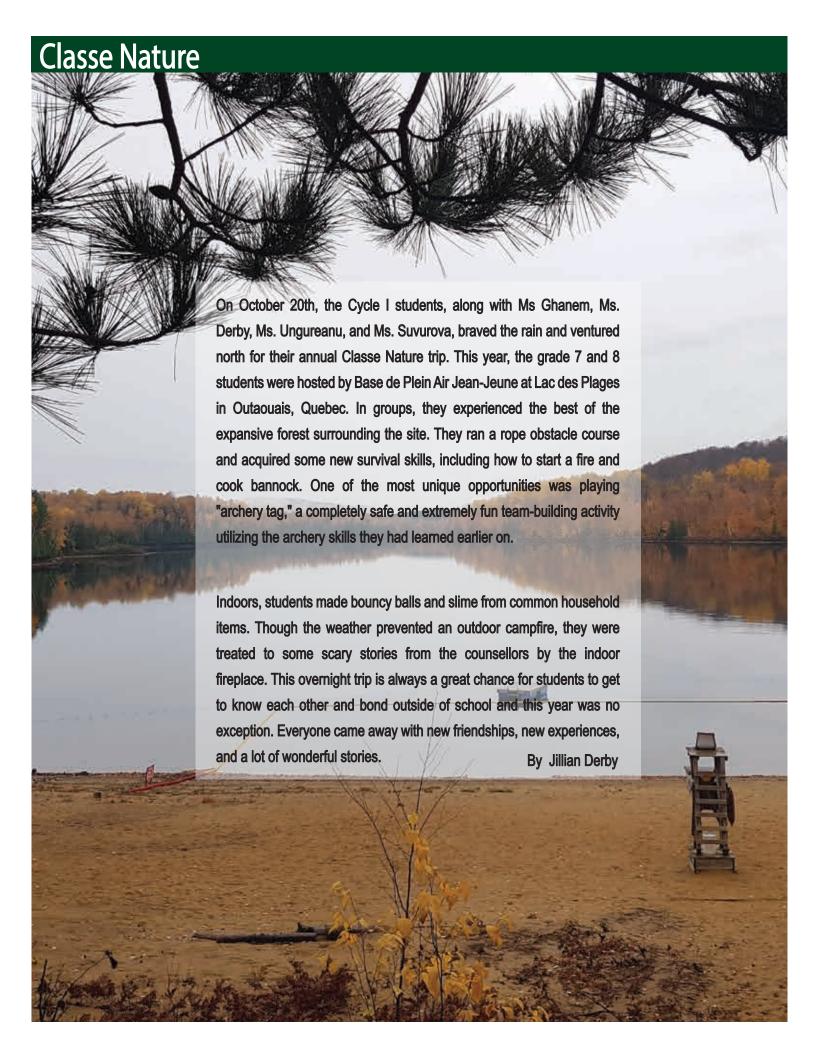
#### **Running for a Cure**

We are very impressed with our students who surpassed their goal and raised over \$5500 for the Terry Fox Foundation to support cancer research. The sun was shining and the entire school enthusiastically participated in this important event.

Many teachers volunteered to partake in incentives to encourage students to work extra hard to reach their goal. From beard shaving to the ice bucket challenge to being duct taped to the wall and more, teachers were great sports and carried out their incentives with merriment.











Grade 7 and 8 students embrace nature

## Fun in the Forest





## Most Boxes Collected in Montreal!

#### Remarkable Volunteer Efforts at Kells

When the truck arrived to gather several boxes of food items for Share the Warmth, the driver cheerfully exclaimed, "This is the most boxes that I have picked up in Montreal for those in need!"

We are very proud of our students who volunteer their time to support organizations in our community and help those who are less fortunate.

For several years, Kells Academy has participated in the holiday food drive. The students collect non-perishable food items for families who live well below the poverty line. Community volunteers use the donations to make food baskets, which are then distributed to those in need.

Share the Warmth, an organization in Point St. Charles, has been helping those less fortunate since 1989. It began with three women who wanted to give hope to the homeless by collecting food and warm clothes for them.

They reached out to the community through an article in The Gazette and were overwhelmed by the incredible response that they received.

In the past 25 years, the organization has evolved. It now features a second-hand clothing shop, a food bank, a school food program, a music program, and a tutoring program for foster children.

It was impressive to witness how enthusiastic our students were to support Share the Warmth. With the leadership of our student council teachers, Jamie Rubenovitch and Kimberly Blain, the representatives of Stuco were tasked with educating the student body on the mission of the organization and encouraging them to donate non-perishable food items.

This year, the Grade 8 class, overseen by Jillian Derby, collected the most food items for the cause. As a well-deserved reward, they will be treated to a pizza lunch.

Share the Warmth is proud to have become a haven of hope and maker of dreams for children and members of our community. It is wonderful that Kells played a part in giving hope to people. Their dedication to important causes in the community is admirable and heart warming.



## Tiny Miracles

#### **Knitting/Crochet Flex**

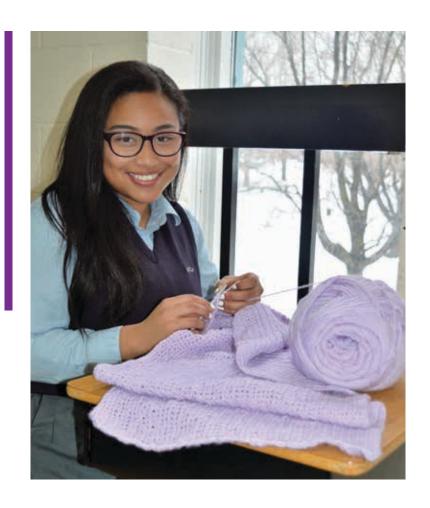
We were so pleased when one of our Kells parents approached us and asked if we would be interested in becoming involved in the Tiny Miracle Foundation. This fund is an initiative of the Jewish General Hospital Auxiliary. They are committed to supporting the most vulnerable and tiniest patients by purchasing vital medical equipment for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

November 17th is World Prematurity Day and student council arranged a free dress day to raise money. We raised \$365 for the Tiny Miracle Fund.

The Flex crochet class is taking part in another initiative to support the preemies as well. They will be knitting blankets for the babies, as a parting gift from the hospital. We have purchased yarn in varying shades of purple, as it is the colour honouring premature babies. The crochet class is very excited about this important project and we look forward to delivering the cozy blankets to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

As they say at the hospital, "Any child cared for at our NICU is a reason to celebrate." We feel the same way and look forward to celebrating the tiny miracles with our handmade gifts.







# Cist F

1st: Amine Abdenadhe and Omar Abdullah



3rd: Ousaid Awad and Mohamad El Hajj

## Social Science Fair



2nd: Lucas Pepe



Grade 7: Brian Vine



Grade 8: Justin Haigh



Grade 9: William Nixon



Honorable mention: Anessa St-Jean



Honorable mention: Loulia Al Ghrewati

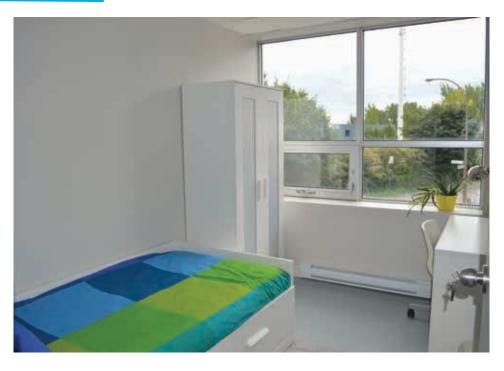
## SOCIAL SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS

The social science fair took place on November 4, 2016. All students from grade 7-9 completed a social science fair project and a couple of projects from each grade were selected to participate in the actual fair. The projects covered a range of topics from ancient civilizations, the medieval times, the renaissance, and Canadian history. This fair allowed for students to share their unique interests and become experts on a specific historical topic. The social science fair was a huge success thanks to the hard work of the Kells Academy junior students

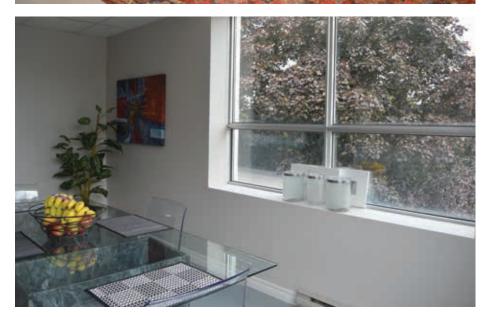
By Cassandra Fischer

#### Kells International Residence

It was with great excitement that we opened the doors to our residence in late August 2016. The facilities are modern yet homey. A work in progress, we are currently at full capacity with 11 students from abroad. However, by the time the residence is completed, we will have space for a total of 40 students. All rooms are tastefully furnished and 3 meals are included in the residence fees. Students also have the option to choose between a shared room with one other student or a premium single room (at an extra cost).







Our objective is to provide an enriching experience in a secure and supportive environment. It is a unique opportunity for students from a variety of communities and countries to share in the boarding school adventure.

I had the opportunity to speak with a few students who are currently living at Kells residence. Diana and Bona highlighted the location of the residence and how pleased they were with its close proximity to the high school. Both girls stay in the premium single rooms and enjoy having their own space and a quiet area to study. Bona also feels that her English has improved while living in residence. Nick and Joyce enjoy the atmosphere and expressed their appreciation for the sense of community at the residence.



On November 29th, members of our student council, accompanied by Ms.Rubenovitch and Ms.Blain, spent the morning at Chez Doris, a women's shelter. The students assisted in various areas of the shelter sorting clothes and donations, as well as interacting with the women by playing card games and making holiday crafts.

Chez Doris' vision is to provide a safe place for women in need during the day while maintaining a high level of confidentiality. They provide meals, respite, clothing, socio-recreational activities as well as practical assistance in a secure and accepting environment.

The inspiration for opening the day shelter came from a young woman trying to survive life on the streets of Montreal. Her name was Doris. Little is known about Doris' life before coming to Montreal from Halifax except that Doris was a sister, a friend, and a mother to four small children. She was often described as a beautiful woman inside and out, who was lively and generous.

# Kells Lends a Helping Hand to Women in Need











Alone, impoverished, and battling alcoholism, Doris soon became one of a growing number of destitute women trying to survive life on the streets. A community worker began interviewing women living on the streets of Montreal to determine their primary needs. When Doris was asked what help she felt would most benefit women living in her situation she replied, "A place to go without prying eyes and too many questions."

Tragically, soon after the interview, in November 1974, Doris' body was discovered. She had been murdered. Four decades later, it still remains unsolved. Doris never had the chance to find her sanctuary but her words have helped the

day shelter provide refuge to women for close to 40 years. In honouring her memory, Chez Doris continues to offer a safe haven for women – no questions asked. Their doors are open to all women in need; inclusion is the motto.

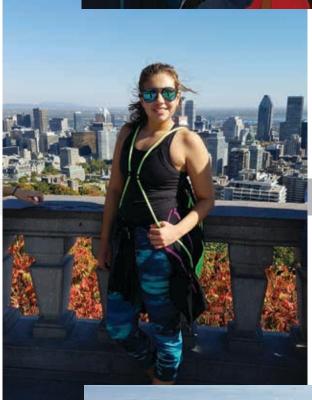
It was very rewarding for our students to volunteer at the shelter and they wish to become more involved in worthy causes in our Montreal community.



This autumn, En Plein Air, a French hiking club was created. The club consisted of 20 students who shared a love for the great outdoors and who wanted an opportunity to practice their French skills outside of the classroom. The students went on three hikes throughout the month of October and oddly enough, got to experience three different seasons. The first hike with Ms. Blain and Mr. Lipinski took place on a beautiful, sunny day on Mount Royal. During the second hike at Owl's Head, the students, as well as Ms. Blain and Ms. Rubenovitch, got to observe the beautiful changing colours of the leaves as they climbed to the top of the mountain. Finally the third hike, which was chaperoned by Ms. Blain and Ms. Bolduc, occurred at Mount Orford where the students had to trek through blizzard-like conditions. Needless to say they were all very happy to have a hot chocolate upon their return to Kells! We are hoping to keep the En Plein Air club going with a snowshoeing outing this coming winter as well as a possible camping trip in the spring.

By Kimberly Blain









#### The KEYS Centre



We are proud to introduce the KEYS (Kells Education for Your Success) Centre. The goal of the KEYS Centre is to ensure that the distinct learners of the Kells community get the support that they need. The focus is on an individualized pathway approach to ensure that each student earns a Secondary School Diploma (SSD) and confidently transitions to postsecondary education. KEYS staff collaborate with students, teachers, and parents to ensure that the educational and social needs of each student is best supported using research-based practices and digital tools.

By Tara Wheeler



#### Flex Ceramics

#### **Kells Creates Beautiful Pottery**

We are very pleased with our ever expanding Flex program. We continue to strive each term to add interesting classes in order to enable students to pursue their individual interests outside of the regular school curriculum. Our hope is to give them a chance to explore areas that may be new and challenging to them.

During the autumn term and for the first time ever at Kells, we were pleased to offer a ceramics class in our Flex program. Under the guidance and support of a local and professional ceramic artist, Natanya Nerenberg, students learned basic clay handbuilding and glazing techniques, which were applied to a final self directed piece, tailored to their personal interest. They learned about good studio practice and developed their skills to create beautiful ceramic pieces.

Their final pieces were very impressive and it is evident that we have some very talented artists at Kells and some budding future ceramic artists!

By Emily Marosi









# Orientation Day Grade 6 Experiences Kells High School

On October 26th, Kells high school was buzzing with excitement! We welcomed 30 grade six students for orientation day. With our grade seven students as hosts, the students participated in several fun workshops together. There were a variety of Halloween themed activities from decorating pumpkins to making slime in Science. It was a busy albeit fun-filled event. The Grade 6 students really enjoyed their day and it was a great opportunity to get a glimpse of what school will be like for them next year.

### Classe Rouge

## **Developing Leadership Skills**

As part of the Physical Education Program, a two day 'Classe Rouge' retreat was organized at Camp Papillon in Saint-Alphonse-Rodrigues. The trip involved activities that focus on physical activity, leadership, and teambuilding.

Grade 11 students went up to Rawdon, Quebec to the overnight leadership retreat. They were put into teams and took part in a series of team-building challenges that tested them both mentally and physically. Teams were awarded points for working together during activities with the winning team earning a month of free dress for PE classes. Highlights of the trip included lifting everyone over a giant wall, zip lining, the Amazing Race, fire building, and much more. The students worked extremely well, had a great time, and most importantly demonstrated some of the key qualities that it takes to be a leader.

By Jamie Bolduc







#### Coding

#### **Learning the Language of Computers**

We are very pleased with the new addition of a coding class to our dynamic Flex program. Our IT specialist, Alireza Kamali, proposed that we add coding to our list of engaging Flex courses, as it is a very important skill for the students to learn in the digital world of today.

Our coding instructor, Alireza, claims "Big companies such as IBM, Microsoft, and Apple are developing new educational programs focussed on teaching coding to students. This is reason why Kells Academy is one of the pioneers in implementing Coding into the school program. We recognize its importance."

Alireza explained that, "Back in the day, coding used to be complicated and programmers had to code every single little task that they needed the computer to do. Now coding has reached a new level of advancement. For example, in the past people used to have to create five pages of codes just for computers to be able to generate a random number between 1 to 5; now that code is available to them. This advancement in coding allows the students to have more time to focus on creating new innovative programs instead of focussing on the little tasks that the computer needs to do. By not having to reinvent the wheel, they can make more complicated and smarter applications. This new type of coding is called object oriented programming."

The Coding class began at the beginning of November and the group has demonstrated great enthusiasm in learning the language of computers.

The first project that they were responsible for was to write a set of codes using the app called 'Swift Playground'.



The objective of the set of codes was to make a cute little figure (man) move from one end of the screen to the other, passing obstacles along the way.

I had the opportunity to speak to a few students about the coding and ask what the buzz was all about. When I asked Omar Abdullah about his reflection on coding class, he said, "Computers are not as intelligent as we think. In coding, we learned that computers need to be told everything that they do, step by step. Even a tiny error can differentiate the entire outcome. The computer can not tell that you made a mistake and it will just do as it is told."

When I asked another student, Osama Atrach, what he liked about the coding class, he claimed, "I really like coding class because it implements our logic and creativity to produce software that we can use to benefit our lifestyle."

Linda Liukas, co-founder of a coding workshop programme Rail Girls, believes that coding is "the literacy of the 12st century" and the need for people to speak the ABC of programming is imminent. "Our world is increasingly run by software and we need more diversity in the people who are building it. More importantly, writing software is about expression, creativity - and practical application," Liukas told IBTimes UK.

"Our kids should learn to bend, join, break, and combine code in a way it wasn't designed to. It's a whole generation of kids that will use code like our generation used words."

By Emily Marosi



#### **Amazing Athletics**



#### **Kells Values Teamwork**

We are proud to promote teamwork and encourage a healthy lifestyle in our Kells community. Athletic participation and competition are an important part of our school experience and through participation on our teams, students learn dedication, sportsmanship, teamwork, and perseverance. Moreover, they learn that success is measured in making a commitment and rising to the challenge, regardless of the outcome.

The progress of many of these valuable skills is evident as we watch the games and observe the participation in Kells Athletics. We had a busy and exciting season in sports this autumn!

The Juvenile Boys soccer went 3-5 in the regular season, finishing third in division, but lost to WIC 4-2 in the quarter finals.

The Juvenile Girls soccer went 1-5 in regular season and unfortunately did not make playoffs. However, many players demonstrated improvement and we saw some great team spirit!

Boys and girls of all grades also had the opportunity to be a part of cross country running and golf. We were fortunate to have many beautiful autumn days on the running trails and the golf course. The Kells cross country running team participated in the annual GMAA cross country race on Mount Royal and our runners clocked some very impressive times.

Now that soccer, golf, and cross country running has come to an end, we are looking forward to new sports opportunities on the horizon. Basketball season has already commenced with our juvenile boys basketball currently in third place in their division, with a 3-3 record.

Our upcoming winter sports options include more basketball, badminton, swimming, and the ski club. Now that Montreal is finally laden with snow, we can't wait to hit the slopes!



#### A Reflection from Our Director



This has been an exceptionally busy term at Kells. Construction has started on the middle school building and our new residence has opened. We were so pleased to welcome several international students to our brand new accommodation. The social science fair was a great success and students have been involved in many events and activities, including fundraising and volunteering.

Kells was delighted to welcome two new staff members to our administration. Tara Wheeler to take the position of Special Education Coordinator and Emily Marosi who will be responsible for Communications. Ms. Wheeler coordinates the delivery of our special education model which aims to emphasize inclusiveness while still supporting individual needs. She has also been instrumental in setting up the new Kells Education for Your Success (KEYS) Center, a cozy room where students can go for additional support. Additionally, she works with a team to implement our extensive English as a

Second Language (ESL) program. Ms Marosi will be assisting with student recruitment and the planning of school events. With a background in education, she was pleased to teach Spanish in our Flex program. She has also undertaken this newsletter and as you can see, enjoys taking photographs of school life for our publications and our new website.

We are also thrilled to announce that Marla Perlman, elementary school principal, has agreed to extend her role to become head of the middle school. Ms Perlman plans to help facilitate students' transition to high school by maintaining the support and structure that students' enjoy at elementary while introducing them to the rigours of the high school curriculum.

Technology continues to thrive at Kells. Coding and Robotics are now both a part of Flex and the plan in the future is to incorporate it into the curriculum. It is a joy to observe students in these classes mastering the art of programming. At Kells, we recognize that giving students an understanding of the language of computers will give them an edge in the future.

As we enter the new year, we look forward to many more exciting events at Kells from our Science Fair to a ski trip to Mont Sainte-Anne, our spring concert, and much more.

I take this opportunity to wish all the best to Mr. Joseph Urovitch who resigned his position recently as principal of Kells high school.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy new year to you all.

Irene Woods



## Kells Academy 6865 De Maisonneuve West, Montreal, Quebec H4B 1T1

#### **EXPERIENCE BEING A 'STUDENT FOR A DAY'**

We are hosting a 'student for a day' activity. If you are looking to transfer your child from their elementary or high school, this day is for you!

This event will provide students with the unique opportunity to experience our innovative program, which is designed to enhance your child's strengths in a positive and nurturing environment.

Come and experience being a 'student for a day' on Thursday, February 16th, 2017 from 9am-3pm.



oblining your participation by restrictly our, 2017 by canning to at 014 400 0000 or citialing reading

#### **Reserve Your Spot Now!**