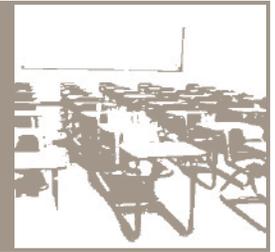


OPERATION "BACK TO SCHOOL" 2007

ENCOURAGING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO STAY IN SCHOOL



Job market - Employment prospects - Core competencies to develop

AND WHAT IF YOUR TESTIMONIAL COULD CHANGE SOMEONE'S LIFE?

MARCH 26 TO APRIL 27, 2007

SUMMARY

Operation "Back to School" is an annual event of organized conference-testimonials held in French or English in public and private high schools in the Greater Montreal area. This year, we would also like to organize conference-testimonials in certain community organizations in the Greater Montreal area involved in the dropout prevention.

About 350 meetings between business people and students are organized each spring from the end of March to the end of April.

This project, established by the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, rallies some 2,200 business men and women who, since 1997, have been "going back to school" to share their experiences and passions with nearly 90,000 high school students in order to encourage them to stay in school.

SPRING 2007

This year, the Board of Trade will carry out its 11th Operation "Back to School". Since its creation, our organization has been inviting its members to go into high schools to talk about the importance of staying in school. April has also become the "stay-in-school" month.

Operation "Back to School" 2007 is possible due to the contribution of Fonds Ville-Marie.

OBJECTIVE

Operation "Back to School" was developed to stem the dropout rate and encourage youths to obtain their high school leaving diploma. One of the best ways to influence and motivate young people is to provide them with role models, experienced individuals who come to talk about their experiences in a friendly, dynamic and interactive environment.

This twinning program also helps forge ties between schools and the business community. Quickly surpassing their main objective, these meetings have provided students, educators and guidance counsellors with better information about the workplace, job opportunities and essential competencies that make people more employable.

IMPACT OF OPERATION BACK TO SCHOOL

Clearly, we cannot quantify the impact of Operation "Back to School" on the dropout rate. However, based on the comments of educators and teachers, we know that these meetings give hope to today's youth. Thus we believe that our overriding objective – to encourage students to stay in school – is achieved, and this means our program is a success.



Chambre de commerce
du Montréal métropolitain

Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal

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-
STUDENTS ARE MORE MOTIVATED, ENTHUSIASTIC AND BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THE WORKPLACE,
JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND THE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED
-

SOME COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

" [...] Since the day you came to talk to us about what you do for a living, I have been more motivated to continue with my studies."

"You gave me back the desire to try harder and pursue my dream..."

"[...] Before I met you, I wasn't sure if I was going to go on with my studies. Thanks to you, I'm definitely going to continue past high school."

"I learned a lot about the workplace. How you have to adapt to change... and that you have to want to learn [...]"

" [...] What I retained the most is the sense of responsibility, the desire to learn, the ability to communicate and of course, to enjoy what you do."

-
EDUCATORS FEEL THEY ARE GETTING SUPPORT AND A BETTER CONTACT WITH THE WORKING WORLD
-

COMMENTS FROM EDUCATORS AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELLORS

"... after the presentations by businesspeople, I saw flickers of light in many eyes... encouraging flickers of hope."

"This initiative of the Board of Trade is a special moment that allows us to stay in touch with the real labour market."

"[...] It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to hear personal testimonials from these successful people on the value of remaining in school and pursuing a post secondary education... The initiative of the Board of Trade added an important dimension to our career education program... in our rapidly changing economy, it is crucial for our young people to have accurate, up to date information about the job market of the future, the expectations of employers, and how to best prepare themselves for the demands of the global economy... trusting that this important collaboration between the business community and the secondary schools will continue [...]"

"[...] It's these kinds of initiatives that enable us educators who love teaching to continue our work despite EVERYTHING and to believe that we're not alone on board this ship!"

"I personally believe that these testimonials really help students persevere in their studies."

