



Lynn Dallaire

Teacher

It's funny how life turns out. As a kid, I was never fond of school, even less as I got older. I was raised in the turbulent 70s where I was always a bit of a rebel growing up, I always needed to do things outside the norm. I went to LaSalle Protestant High School (now known as Pearson Adult and Career Centre) where I ended up dropping out before graduation. I then started working in a French cuisine takeout restaurant in Old Montreal at the age of 17. I had lots of fun working there and met plenty of interesting people but soon realized that this was not my career.

I eventually saw a posting for a job with children with special needs, and for some reason, it spoke to me and I applied. I was hired as a lunch monitor and eventually moved into a teacher's aide position. I worked with a teacher who was very passionate and caring who not only encouraged me to go back to school but who sparked my interest in education. That's when I decided that I wanted to be a teacher!

With this new desire and motivation in mind, I returned to finish my high school, CEGEP, and then went on to university. I received my Bachelor of Arts with a specialization in Early Childhood Education from Concordia University. After graduating, I got a job teaching in a two-room school in the Lower North Shore of Quebec. I then came back home to LaSalle and started substituting in local schools. I taught many years at Allion Elementary, then at Laurendeau Dunton (now LaSalle Elementary Senior School).

I went back to night school and completed a certificate of Special Education at McGill and a few years later I completed my Master of Education. I always enjoyed sharing my passion for teaching through mentoring many student teachers from various universities. I was even selected by the Canadian Teachers' Federation in Project Overseas to travel to Ghana, Africa to provide professional development and giving workshops to new teachers- an experience I'll never forget!

This year is my 35th year of teaching and even at 60 years old I'm still enjoying it. Looking back to when I was a high school dropout to where I am now, I truly believe that life brings everyone on their own paths to discover something about themselves. For me, it was realizing that the thing I hated and feared the most, became my biggest passion in life. I've made it my goal to share this passion with my students and make sure they see the importance of learning something new every day.

If there's one important thing I learned from my path and from being a teacher it's that forming a strong and positive relationship with your students and their families based on trust, respect, and empathy can give them the encouragement they need to believe in themselves and accomplish their goals. I've always believed that a positive relationship creates a safe environment for growth. For me, teaching has never been a career, but a passion.