



SYDNEY ACADEMY COMMUNICATION PLAN 2011 - 2012

The Administration and Teaching Staff of Sydney Academy encourage communications with parents and guardians on student progress. The intent of this general document is to outline how information on student learning will be communicated to parents and guardians. As well, a schedule of significant events for the year is included.

The main contact information for the school is as follows:

Telephone: 562-5464
Fax: 564-4472
E-mail: sydacademy@staff.ednet.ns.ca
Website: <http://sacademy.cbv.ns.ca>

Teachers provide a communication plan for each subject that your son/daughter is taking. This teacher communication plan provides:

- an overview of the course,
- the teacher's expectations of the students for learning success,
- how student learning will be assessed,
- information on evaluation procedures,
- the range of formal and informal communication methods used by the teacher
- ways in which the parent can initiate communication with the teacher.

Communication plans are given to all students to take home for their parents/guardians to see at the beginning of each semester. Communication Plans will also be posted on the Sydney Academy website. Please contact the office if you did not receive a copy of the Communication Plan for each course.

Another important communication vehicle is the Power School Parent and Student Portals. These links on the Sydney Academy Website allow parents and students to check attendance and marks at any time. We ask that parents/guardians call the school within five days of the absence to excuse a student. Success in school is directly related to student engagement in their work and regular attendance. Parents are invited at any time to contact Vice-Principal, Mr. John Barron, for an update on attendance.

Attendance Policy- a New Attendance Policy has been implemented at all the High Schools in our School Board. Students who miss 16 classes in any course may be ineligible for credit in that course. A student who misses 16 classes in more than two courses may be expelled for the semester. All absences will count toward the 16 allowable absences **Except: serious documented medical issues (Medical Documentation Required), death in the family, court, religious observances, and special circumstances approved by the School/School Board.**

*****Absences for family trips, community based sports or activities, personal reasons etc. Do count as absences toward the 16 maximum*******

*** Please Note:** Projects and assignments are to be turned in on the assigned due date, whether or not the student is in school. The projects and assignments may be sent to the teacher via email or delivered to the school. Points will be deducted for late projects according to the teacher's communication plan and/or classroom policy unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher due to exceptional circumstances. Family vacations, community and based tours or competitions have valuable social and educational benefits, but are a serious detriment to the instruction process. Teachers are not responsible to make-up tests or assignments or to give credit for missed work.

Sydney Academy has instituted a "Homework Page" to further support parents and students. Information on current homework, assignments and upcoming tests is available for each teacher's course. The Homework Page may be accessed either on the drop-down menu of the student tab on the Sydney Academy Website (<http://sacademy.cbv.ns.ca>) or by clicking on the homework tab on the right hand side of the Board Website (www.cbv.ns.ca).

In an effort to ensure that our assessment policy reflects the ongoing performance of the student over an entire course and also to promote full attendance in classes, the following school assessment policy has been adopted:

- 20% - comprehensive test/assessments done during the mid-term assessment period
- 50% - tests, assignments, homework, projects, labs, in-class assignments, etc., assigned over the duration of the course
- 30% - final examination for APEF courses or final comprehensive assessment

Teachers are not required to provide make-up tests or assignments for missed assessment components. **due to an excused absence.** Instead the value of other assessment pieces may be **pro-rated** to determine the assessment mark. Excused absences include illness, family emergency, religious celebration, etc. Family trips and community sports trips are not normally excused absences. Students who miss assessment pieces due to an **unexcused absence** will be given a mark of **zero** (All excused absences must be reported with-in five days of the absence to be excused). The mid-term progress report to students will represent a mark based 50% on the mid-term comprehensive assessment and 50% on the other assessment pieces completed at the time of the report. **This mark does not represent a set percentage of the final mark already completed.** Final marks for tests, projects, assignments, labs, etc. are based on what is assigned in those categories for the entire course.

The following schedule will be of interest to you:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Mon., Sept. 5 | Labour Day – Schools Closed |
| Tues., Oct. 4 | Professional Development Day - Teachers Only |
| Mon., Oct. 10 | Thanksgiving Day –Schools closed |
| Fri., Oct. 28 | Conference Day – (Teachers only) |
| Fri., Nov. 11 | Remembrance Day – (Schools closed) |
| Tues., Nov. 22 | Report Cards to Students |
| Thurs., Nov. 24 | Parent-Teacher Meetings - 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. |
| Fri., Nov. 25 | Parent-Teacher Meetings – 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. |
| Fri., Nov. 25 | Staff Development in afternoon |
| Mon., Nov. 28 | Professional Development Day – Teacher Only |
| Fri., Dec. 16 | Last Teaching Day Prior to Christmas |
| Tues., Jan. 3 | First Teaching Day after Christmas |
| Wed., Feb. 1 | Grading and Classifying Day |
| Thurs., Feb. 2 | Second Semester Begins |
| Fri., Mar. 9 | Last Teaching Day Prior to March Break |
| Mon., Mar. 19 | First Teaching Day after March Break |
| Fri., Apr. 6 | Good Friday - Schools Closed |
| Mon., Apr. 9 | Easter Monday - Schools Closed |
| Tues., April 24 | Report Cards to Students |
| Thurs., April 26 | Parent Teacher Meetings - 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. |
| Fri., April 27 | Parent-Teacher Meetings – 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. |
| Fri., April 27 | Professional Development in afternoon |
| Mon., May 21 | Victoria Day - Schools Closed |
| Thurs., June 28 | Grading and Classifying |
| Fri., June 29 | Grading Day |

I would like to briefly inform you of other communication methods that will be used throughout the year. The Sydney Academy Website provides a great deal of valuable information about the school and our programs. The Sydney Academy School Advisory Council is composed of parents, students, community members and representatives of the teachers and support staff as well as the principal. They work together in an advisory capacity to increase the quality of education being provided by the school. The council meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. The current chairperson is Ms. Cathy Delaney. Our meetings are open to all stakeholders and we encourage you to take part. Our first meeting is on Wednesday, September 29.

From time to time letters will be sent or meetings will be held for specific groups.

Examples include: parents/guardians of the graduating class, homestay parents of international students, parents of students in the international baccalaureate program, and parents of students of various school teams, clubs and travel groups. Sydney Academy has an Internet Access Acceptable Use Policy which must be signed by students and parents/guardians. This must be returned to the school prior to the student gaining school-provided internet access. This policy outlines appropriate internet usage and, as well, consequences of unacceptable use.

Sydney Academy participates in the School Board’s Breakfast for Learning Program. This program provides a nutritious breakfast free to students between 8:00 a.m. and 8:40 a.m. Students enjoy both the social and nutritional aspects of this program. Many find it an extra incentive to arrive early. An educational benefit is evident in that students who participate are often better able to focus on their class work.

In closing, I invite you to contact teachers, Vice-Principals - Mr. John Barron or Mr. Harold Kyte, Guidance Counselors - Ms. Darlene Kyte or Ms. Paula Pace, or me should you have any questions or concerns about your son’s/daughter’s academic progress or other issues.

Kevin Deveaux, Principal