



SYDNEY ACADEMY COMMUNICATION PLAN 2009 - 2010

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 monthly attendance report that students are given by their homeroom teacher. This report outlines excused and unexcused absenteeism as well as class tardiness. Parents must 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. The attendance report should be reviewed with your son/daughter, signed by you and returned to the homeroom teacher. Parents are invited at any time to contact Vice-Principal, Mr. John Barron, for an update on attendance.

In an attempt to provide more timely information on unexcused absenteeism, Sydney Academy uses an automated attendance dialer program. The software program makes a telephone call to parents/guardians to inform them of any unexcused absence on a particular day. The program message simply states that a student living in the household has an unexcused absence for the period(s) indicated. It will note the student's grade level but will not give the student name. You will then be asked to telephone the school the next day to clarify the absence.

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 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 7	Labour Day – Schools Closed
Mon., Sept. 28	Professional Development Day - Teachers Only
Mon., Oct. 12	Thanksgiving Day –Schools closed
Fri., Oct. 23	Conference Day – (Teachers only)
Wed., Nov. 11	Remembrance Day – (Schools closed)
Wed., Nov. 18	Report Cards to Students
Thurs., Nov. 19	Parent-Teacher Meetings - 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Fri., Nov. 20	Morning Staff Development - Teachers only
Fri., Nov. 20	Parent-Teacher Meetings - 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Mon., Nov 30	Professional Development Day – Teacher Only
Fri., Dec. 18	Last Teaching Day Prior to Christmas
Mon., Jan. 4	First Teaching Day after Christmas
Tues., Jan.26	First Semester Exams begin (Tentative)
Mon., Feb. 1	Grading and Classifying Day - Teachers only
Tues., Feb. 2	Second Semester Begins
Thurs., Feb. 4	Report Cards to Students
Fri., Mar. 12	Last Teaching Day Prior to March Break
Mon., Mar. 22	First Teaching Day after March Break
Fri., Apr.2	Good Friday - Schools Closed
Mon., Apr. 5	Easter Monday - Schools Closed
Wed., April 21	Report Cards to Students
Thurs., April 22	Parent Teacher Meetings - 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Fri., April 23	Morning Staff Development - Teachers only
Fri., April 23	Parent-Teacher Meetings - 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Mon., May 24	Victoria Day - Schools Closed
Thurs., June 24	Prom and Safe Grad Party (Tentative)
Sun., June 27	Graduate Ecumenical Service (Tentative)
Mon., June 28	Graduation Ceremony 7:00 p.m. Centre 200 (Tentative)
Tues., 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 teacher member, Mr. Terry Boone. 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. Lee Cantwell 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