

Teacher Report - February 2021

End of Term 1: Parent-Teacher Interviews

As per the Ministry of Education, we were informed that the weight of term 1 will be 35% and that of term 2 as 65%. Many teachers (and students) have been left in a holding pattern, wondering if the usual end of year local EMSB exams, cancelled last year, will take place. The outcome of this decision does, of course, greatly affect teacher planning and delivery of curriculum. We do feel students - especially those online or partially online - are relieved that Ministry exams were cancelled for June 2021.

Parent-Teacher interviews were conducted online on February 11th. We appreciate the administration organizing this as this P-T interview was based on an "invite" basis facilitated by the Admin team.

Online Learning: Netiquette Introduced

Ms. Colannino, Mme Ferland and Mr. Northey, as part of the Digital Citizenship Committee, created the official RWA Netiquette document. Seen as an important step, especially now with the drastic increase of Online learning, to normalize and support best practices, joining many other schools that have adopted similar online communication expectations for students, parents, and teachers alike. This document introduces a set standards and procedures for RWA's online and virtual learning platforms

While the approval of the document by both this board and Staff Council has passed, the actual official introduction by staff to students seems to have stalled. How staff should proceed to best deliver this information is open for discussion, while the "when" of delivery should be as soon as possible.

Teacher Physical and Mental Health (Sick-Leaves)

Teachers still have a momentous task. The government's fluid handling of the pandemic conditions has made this year like no other for one and all. The myriad of challenges; from continued classroom disinfection to dealing with fluctuating levels of student worry to trying to offer the usual high quality of education, the strain on the teacher and all staff members is certainly being felt and building.

One of the most unfortunate results of this is a teacher taking "sick leave". The obvious downside in terms of pedagogy, is how this can negatively impact the learning consistency for our students. No one, especially teachers, wants a revolving door when it comes to learning quality and we understand the concerned parents' worry for their children's academics especially for courses that have not yet found a suitable replacement.

Appreciating the Ped-days in February and March Break

Usually the month of February kicks off, in earnest, the many activities and trips that populate the RWA school calendar. These trips (i.e. grade 8 ski trip) and activities (i.e. RWA Science Fair) offer a welcome change of routine for everyone, new and different, stimulating challenges for the student, and a great opportunity for the teacher/student relationship to take on another dimension. Moreover, these activities have always helped overall school morale in the darker winter months.

Unfortunately, as of this writing, all these “perks”, for students and teachers alike, have been cancelled, and with it the usual mental health respite.

Having said that, we appreciate and have, as best teachers can, capitalized on the various non-teaching and PED days, as well as the incidental snow day, in this month. Moreover, we are glad that the March Break was not delayed or cancelled as had briefly been rumoured. These “days off” are everything but that. These days help us to relax, reflect and recharge so that we can return to our profession ready to do the best we can under the circumstances.