



## **Royal West Academy**

189 Easton Avenue, Montreal-West, Quebec, H4X 1L4

Telephone: (514) 489-8454 Fax: (514) 489-3682

August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **Dear Parent or Guardian of a Secondary I student:**

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year. My name is Tony Pita and it is an honour and a privilege to be the Principal of Royal West Academy. We look forward to a successful, enriching and enjoyable year for your child at Royal West Academy. I am taking this opportunity to pass on several information items.

**At Royal West Academy, Vice-Principals** are assigned by student family names. **Ms. Catherine Lumsden** [clumsden@msb.qc.ca](mailto:clumsden@msb.qc.ca) is responsible for all students whose family name is between A-L. **Mr. Steve Manstavich** [smanstavich@msb.qc.ca](mailto:smanstavich@msb.qc.ca) is responsible for students whose family name is between M-Z. Should you have any concerns, feel free to reach out to them by email.

[Royal West Academy School Calendar](#) can be found on our school website- [www.royalwestacademy.com](http://www.royalwestacademy.com). We recommend parents bookmark the calendar which includes important academic information, pedagogical days, and many activities and trip schedules. The calendar is updated regularly. Parents should also consider bookmarking the [Student Bulletin](#) to keep up with school announcements and upcoming extracurricular activities (ECA).

**School Uniform & Supplies:** Students must purchase shoes that are completely black (including logos and soles), non-marking, closed heel and closed toe. No form of platform shoes, high-heeled shoes, clogs, sandals or boots may be worn. Shoelaces must be all black and remain tied. Please note physical education uniforms may not be worn outside of physical education unless the administration makes an exception due to high heat and humidity. In this case, parents and students will receive an email informing them of the exception. RWA Uniform can be purchased at [Top Marks](#). More information on how to order your child's uniform can be found on the RWA website. **Uniform regulations may be found on-line under the [Code of Conduct](#) section and in the Student Agenda.** The staff depends on your collaboration in ensuring that uniform regulations are followed. Your assistance in checking each morning before the start of the school day is a great help to us.

Prior to the first day, students will need to purchase specific materials, as outlined in the MindPOP package included. During the first days of classes, students will receive lists of required classroom materials from their subject teachers. The School Store will be open from 8:00 – 8:30 and 12:25-13:15 during the first week of school. During the school year, the School Store is open on Monday to Thursday from 12:25-13:15. All orders must be paid in cash, Interac, or cheque made out to RWA Home and School Association. A **Used Uniform Sale** will be held on Monday, August 28 in our Home and School store from 12:00 to 16:00.

**Student Fee:** Parents and Guardians will receive a statement through the Mozaik Parent Portal in the coming weeks. We ask that you pay your child's fee in its entirety. Please make separate payments for each child. If parents or guardians require a payment plan, they should contact Mr. Pita by email [tpita@msb.qc.ca](mailto:tpita@msb.qc.ca)

**School Tour:** Our Student Life Association/Leadership team has planned a tour of the school as well as some fun orientation activities for Secondary I students on **Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>**. Their invitation is included with this letter.

The **Governing Board**, required by the Quebec Education Act, is an essential part of school life at Royal West. With parent, teacher, administration, student and community representatives, it is responsible for the school's Educational

Project, Sexuality Education and Safe School Action Plan, as well as aspects of educational services, community services, and physical and financial resources. The Board has eight parent representatives who are elected for staggered two-year terms. Four parents must be elected for a two-year term this September. Additionally, a parent will be elected for a one-year term.

**We urge all parents to attend the Annual General Meeting/Elections at the school at 19:00 on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, in the RWA Performing Arts Center.** Your support at this meeting is critical if we are to have a representative Governing Board. Please visit the [Governing Board](#) page on the Royal West web site to learn how this organization provides essential support to our school, then come on **September 26<sup>th</sup>** to learn more and see how you can help.

**Student Lockers:** All students are required to use **locks issued by Royal West Academy only**. This does not apply to physical education locker room, but we strongly recommend that all students secure their belongings during physical education classes or athletic team activities. Homeroom teachers will distribute locks to students on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Any lost or damaged locks must be replaced at a cost of \$11.60. If possible, we recommend that parents spend some time with their child reviewing procedures to open standard combination locks. Homeroom teachers will also review these procedures with students. Secondary I students often worry about opening their lock in a timely manner.

**Parent/Guardian Involvement Form:** In joining the school community, **parents agree to undertake and assist with their child's educational experience at Royal West Academy**. Please complete and return the electronic [RWAHSA Volunteer Form 2023/24](#) directly to the Home and School indicating where you will contribute on a volunteer basis. **We ask that you complete the form prior to August 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**Absences:** The school requires that the parent or guardian contact the school to confirm their child's absence daily using the Mozaik Parent Portal. If a parent is unable to access Mozaik, a student must return to school after an absence and present the homeroom teacher with a signed and dated note from their parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. Only one parent number may be called by the RWA automated system. Please note that RWA can only accept late notes due to appointments or illness. **All other late arrivals** will be sanctioned by an afternoon detention (15:10 to 15:45).

Students should bring early dismissal notes to the office prior to homeroom. Under no circumstances may a student leave the building early without clearance from the general office. The student must always check out with the office before leaving the school.

**Pedestrian Safety:** Due to the proximity of the school to the CPR train station and the heavy traffic areas around the school, the staff will be guiding students through the safest route to school during the first week of school. Please respect the traffic regulations and encourage your children to do the same, by reviewing safety information and appropriate pedestrian conduct with your children. **Montreal West requests that you drop off your children at the Easton door** instead of Ainslie, as this area becomes very congested and dangerous for students and residents. We appreciate your cooperation.

**First Day: Secondary I students** should report to the Performing Arts Center in uniform on **August 30<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30**, where they will be welcomed and meet their homeroom teacher. Parents will receive an email with their child's homeroom number on August 29<sup>th</sup>. Please see that your child comes prepared with writing materials. During the first week, individual subject teachers will notify students regarding specific materials required for each of their classes. The first day will be a shortened timetable with **dismissal at 12:25**. The next day, students will follow a regular schedule for Day 1 starting at 8:30 and ending at 15:00. Students should bring a lunch, as full cafeteria services may not be available during the first couple days of school.

Here is the schedule for our first day of school:

8:30 – 9:20	Homeroom
9:25 – 9:45	<b>Day 1, Period 1</b>
9:50 – 10:10	Period 2
10:10 – 10:20	Recess
10:25 – 10:45	Period 3

10:50 – 11:10

11:15 – 11:35

11:40 – 12:00

12:05 – 12:25

Period 4

Period 5

Period 6

**Day 2, Period 1**

We look forward to working with you and your child to ensure they have a successful and enjoyable experience in 2023-2024.

Sincerely,

Tony Pita  
Principal



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**August 15, 2023**

**Subject: Grade 7 Orientation - Monday, August 28th, 2023.**

**Dear Parent or Guardian of a Secondary I Student,**

Every year before the start of classes the RWA Student Life Association hosts an **Orientation Day**. This day provides the new students a chance to meet each other and familiarize themselves with the high school environment. Please have your child present him/herself to the school's main entrance at **8:30 on Monday, August 28th, 2023**. The event will finish at **12:30**.

*Please have your child bring:*

- *Sunhat*
- *Sunscreen*
- *Bathing suit and towel*
- *Lunch*
- *Weather-appropriate clothing*
- *Water bottle*
- *Running shoes*

Please note that students are **NOT required to wear their school uniform** to this event.

Parents can pick up students at **12:30** on Easton avenue. **SLA members will walk new students to the train and bus stops at the end of the activity day.**

This is a fun event so we encourage all those who can make it to come out and enjoy the activities. We look forward to seeing all the new Sec 1 students there.

Sincerely,

Eve Bercuvitz  
SLA Co-President

Eva Theodosopoulos  
SLA Co-President

Jamal Zigby/ Sadia Di Pietro  
SLA Staff Advisor

# GIVING US ROOM TO LEARN TOGETHER

The Active Learning Classroom Campaign



## Welcome to a new school year!

Dear RWA Community,

The Foundation wishes to offer a warm welcome to our school administration, teachers, parents and students!

We hope that everyone had a wonderful summer. We are excited to get back to work and we would like to share with you that we will be holding our Annual Event in the Fall. More details will follow in September.

In the meantime, we are actively looking for event partners so if you can help, please reach out to us at [info@rwaf.ca](mailto:info@rwaf.ca)

## THANK YOU from the RWA Foundation team!



**Make your  
annual  
contribution  
today at  
[rwaf.ca](http://rwaf.ca)**

## Fundraising

**We are raising money for Active  
Learning Classroom furniture to:**

- Facilitate individualized learning
- Create opportunities for collaboration and creation
- Strengthen relationships within the classroom between peers and teachers
- Improve student exchanges during group work
- Respond to the needs of different teaching subjects or activities within the same classroom
- Increase student motivation and engagement

## How you can help!

**We are recruiting event  
partners, sponsors and  
raffle prizes for our Fall  
2023 Event. Please  
contact [info@rwaf.ca](mailto:info@rwaf.ca)**

# **SOS – Start Organizing *before* September**

**A Guide for Grade 7 Students and their Parents**



**Coordinators:**

**Cristina Almeida/Jan Mateus**

Created by A. Clark and S. Leech-Pepin



## Dear Secondary I Students,

Welcome to Royal West Academy! We are looking forward to getting to know you better as you begin your high school adventure with us.

To help you with your transition into high school, one of your classes each month will be replaced by a **MindPOP** check-up class. These classes will take place approximately one month apart – please see the next page for specific dates. Over the course of the year, various topics will be presented that will support you in your new environment. These topics include:

- Schoolwork Organization
- Home-filing System
- Prioritizing
- Time Management
- Goal Setting
- Attitudes and Mindset
- Exam Preparation
- Test-Taking Strategies
- Mindfulness & Coping with Stress
- Social Life

Enclosed in this package, you will find very important information about: our **MindPOP** program, **required school materials**, as well as details regarding **ESSENTIAL seminars** for your parents. This material is meant to give you an overview of topics that will be explored in greater detail during the check-ups. Please read the details carefully with your parents.

Wishing you a great start to your first year of high school,

Mr. Tony Pita

Principal, Royal West Academy



## **MindPOP Monthly Sessions 2023-24**

# 1 –week of Sept. 5

**The Basics**

HR Teachers

# 2 week of Sept. 25

**Mindsets**

French classes

#3 week of Oct. 23

**Priorities and Learning Strategies**

English classes

# 4 week of Nov. 20

**Long-Term Planning**

Science classes

#5 week of Dec. 11

**Preparing for January Exams**

Math classes

#6 week of Jan. 15

**Mindful Test-Taking**

History classes

#7 week of Feb. 19

**Mindful Presentations**

French classes

#8 week of Mar. 19

**Taking Care of Yourself *Mindfully***

Math classes

#9 week of Apr. 22

**Your *Mindful* Social Life**

English classes

#10 week of May 13

**Looking Back to Look Ahead**

Geography classes



## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is ...

**“being aware of what is happening while it’s happening.”**

**Susan Kaiser Greenland**

### Why is Mindfulness important?

- Introduces you to practices and attitudes that will help you improve your ability to focus, calm yourself and manage stress.
- It emphasizes the importance of being present in the moment with kindness, curiosity and acceptance.



**“Wherever you are – be all there.”**

**Jim Elliot**

# Planning

## Planning Now

Make a **To-Do list** before you start your school work each evening and on weekends that will ensure that your tasks will be completed in a timely manner.

## “Homework Hour”

Each evening, your “Homework Hour” (a designated period of time that you set aside for school work) should include tasks such as organizing your agenda, cleaning out your school bag, and tackling your **To-Do list**. This hour is a minimum, and by no means a maximum, during which you should have no distractions, especially electronic devices. You should be able to carry out your “Homework Hour” independently, but your parents are welcome to remain nearby should you require their assistance. Ideally, you should work in an open space, with all necessary, school-related items easily accessible. If all your homework is completed in under an hour, you should find something else that is school-related to complete. Perhaps you could update your calendar, clean out your schoolbag or start that project?

## Planning Ahead

Use the weekly and monthly views in your agenda to plan for upcoming assignments. When you write a due date for later in the month, break the task down into smaller steps and record reminders in your agenda accordingly.

- For example, “Summer reading notes are due the first week of school. Since I need to read and write notes for 3 books, I plan to read my first book by July 10<sup>th</sup>, my second book by July 24<sup>th</sup>, and my third book by August 7<sup>th</sup>. I plan to complete all of my notes by August 21<sup>st</sup>.”

Having all of these smaller steps written in your agenda will help you to stay on top of your work and allow you to spread out your workload. Also, it is possible that something may come up that does not allow you to follow your pre-determined goals, i.e. completing notes by August 21<sup>st</sup>. Be flexible and re-work your timeline for smaller priorities that may come up.



**“Living your life without a plan is like watching television with someone else holding the remote control.”**

**Peter Turla**

## Required School Materials

All **Secondary I** students must follow the requirements indicated below for the purchase of their school materials. A **ONE binder** system will be used to eliminate bulk and prevent you from lugging too many binders around. You will need to purchase a traditional three ring durable binder, no more than **1½ inches wide** (one with a see-through pocket on the front is ideal to put your school schedule). **Pocket dividers** are added to organize every subject's material, accompanied by a **HOME-filing system** for additional storage. This filing system will hold accumulated tests, quizzes, assignments, and notes to be used for future studying and exam preparation.

### One Binder Set-Up

- Purchase **ONE 1½ inch binder** and a set of pocket dividers similar to:
  - Avery® Durable Slant D-Ring View Binder, 1½":
    - [http://www.staples.ca/en/Avery-Durable-Slant-D-Ring-View-Binder-1-1-2-Black/product\\_823500\\_2-CA\\_1\\_20001](http://www.staples.ca/en/Avery-Durable-Slant-D-Ring-View-Binder-1-1-2-Black/product_823500_2-CA_1_20001)
  - Avery® 11903 Big Tab Insertable Plastic Dividers with Pockets, Multicolour, 8-tab set:
    - [http://www.staples.ca/en/Avery-11903-Big-Tab-Insertable-Plastic-Dividers-with-Pockets-Multicolour-8-Tab-Set/product\\_851632\\_2-CA\\_1\\_20001](http://www.staples.ca/en/Avery-11903-Big-Tab-Insertable-Plastic-Dividers-with-Pockets-Multicolour-8-Tab-Set/product_851632_2-CA_1_20001)
- Place the **pocket dividers** into your new binder.
- Assign each divider to one class, but group some together as follows:

- English
- Français
- Math
- Science
- Géographie
- Histoire
- Drama/Music/Visual Arts
- Ethics/Computers
- Phys Ed

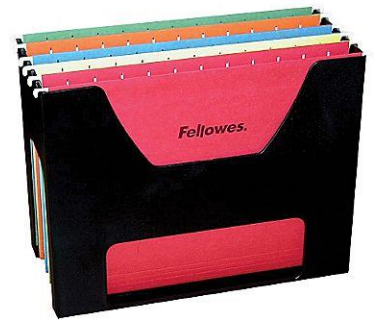


- Papers handed to you throughout the school year should be placed into the appropriate section. With your teacher's guidance, the papers no longer needed on a daily basis should be transferred to your home-filing system.
- Slide your schedule into the clear pocket on the front of your binder. Consider colour-coding each class on your schedule to match the dividers in your binder.
- Next, you'll need to label the two pockets on the inside covers of your binder. The first should be called *Homework* while the second should be called *Miscellaneous*.

- The *Homework* pocket is used to place homework papers that require your attention after school. Once the homework is complete, the assignment can be placed back into the appropriate subject divider in your binder.
- The *Miscellaneous* pocket is used to place papers unrelated to your classes, like ones that your parents need to sign.
- You have set up your binder! To keep it organized, it is important to **take 30 seconds each day** to sort through it to be sure all papers are in the right place.

## Home-filing System

- Choose a system that you believe will work best for you. For example:
  - Accordion folder
  - A drawer in a filing cabinet
  - Hanging folders (as seen in the photo to the right):  
 Fellowes® Desktoppers®, File Holder, Legal Size



[http://www.staples.ca/en/Fellowes-Desktoppers-File-Holder-Legal-Size-Black/product\\_228689\\_2-CA\\_1\\_20001?externalize=certona](http://www.staples.ca/en/Fellowes-Desktoppers-File-Holder-Legal-Size-Black/product_228689_2-CA_1_20001?externalize=certona)

- Within each subject's section, create a minimum of 2 subcategories:
  - Class Notes
  - Tests and Assignments
- Your teachers may have specific requirements regarding the set-up of your home-filing system for their subjects, so be sure to follow their guidelines.
- Create a MindPOP folder for all of the information you will receive throughout the year, such as this package (no subcategories necessary).



**“Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it,  
 it is not all mixed up.”**

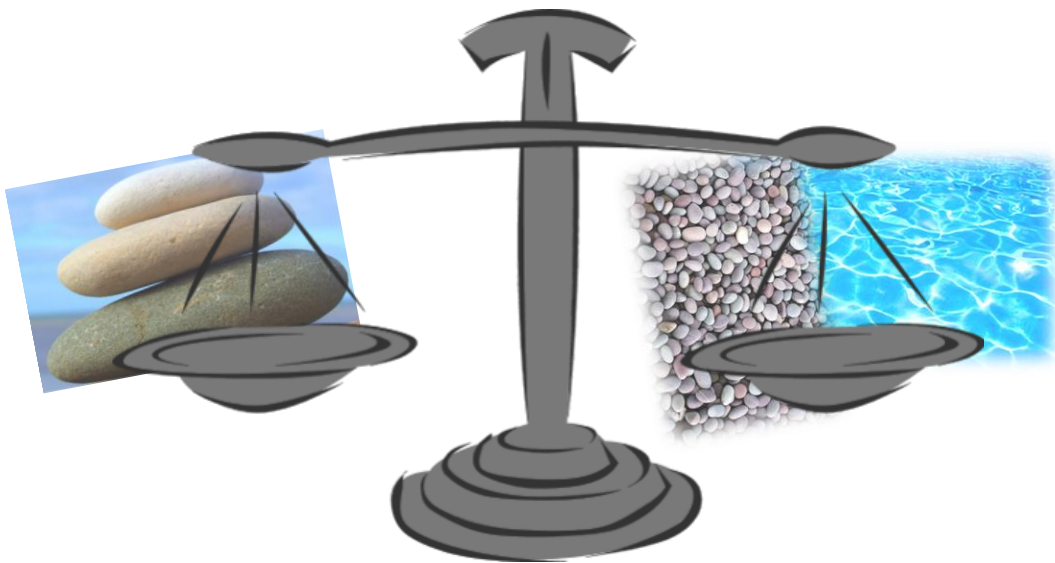
**A.A. Milne, author of the *Winnie-the-Pooh* books.**

# Prioritizing & Time Management

## Priorities

You need to have a clear sense of your priorities and give attention to the most important tasks first. The “rock, pebble, and water” analogy demonstrates the importance of balancing priorities and tackling them in the appropriate order. See the day ahead of you as an empty jar. The key is to first fill the jar with the rocks, then the pebbles, then the water. If the jar is first filled with water, by the time the rocks are added, it will have overflowed.

- Rock priorities are the things we have to do (i.e. family commitments, sleep, eating, school/school work). There are usually serious consequences if these things are not done (i.e. poor grades, being too tired, etc.).
- Pebbles represent the things that you enjoy and would like to spend more time doing (i.e. sports, music, hobbies, socializing with friends, etc.). These things add “spice” to our lives. These priorities are “smaller” because there may be less of a consequence if not done. However, smaller does not mean less significant – you need to have a good balance between rock and pebble priorities in order to lead a healthy life and maintain motivation for the “larger” priorities.
- Water represents the little activities that you enjoy doing but do not necessarily need to schedule into your day (i.e. TV time, texting, internet surfing, video games, etc.). There is no significant consequence if you do not have time to do these things.



**“The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”  
Stephen Covey**

## Essential Seminars

We are pleased to inform you that there are three special events specifically for parents on the RWA calendar this year. They can be identified by the title “**Sec 1 Parent Seminar.**” These workshops provide information that is **essential** for your well-being at Royal West Academy; therefore, your parents’ attendance is highly recommended.

### **ESSENTIAL SEMINARS for Secondary I Parents**

#### **7 pm. at Royal West Academy**

- **October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

*Going with the Flow: A Parent’s Guide to Early Adolescence and the Transition to High School*

Offered by: RWA Student Services

- **November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

*Keeping your Child Safe in the Digital World*

Offered by: RWA Student Services

- **January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

*Stress & Resilience: How You Can Help your High-Achieving Child*

Offered by: RWA Student Services

We look forward to seeing your parents there!

## Testimonials from your Peers

**This program...**

**...is like organizational rehab.**

**...teaches us everything we need to stay organized.**

**...helps me feel more positive towards school.**

**...helps me understand that school isn't what makes life.**

**...teaches us skills will help us in the long run and that we can use in the future.**

**...takes time out of my day to make me calm and more organized.**

**...teaches me to reflect on myself.**

**...lets us know that we are not alone in the school world.**

Some material from MindPOP was inspired by:

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990) Full catastrophe living. Delta Publishing.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2005) Wherever you go, there you are. New York, NY: Hachette Books.

Kruger, S. (2013) SOAR® study skills. Grand Blanc, MI: Grand Lighthouse Publishing.