



Sir John A. Macdonald High School



31 Scholars Road

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T. Wadden
Principal

November 2, 2009

D. Fitzpatrick
Vice Principal

J. Kirkpatrick
Vice Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians:

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In an effort to encourage attendance, high schools in the Halifax Regional School Board are permitted to allow students to be exempt from one examination per semester under the board's policy on **Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning**. The decision to offer exam exemptions here at Sir John A. Macdonald High School was made in consultation with our School Advisory Council in accordance with the policy.

There have been a number of concerns raised by various groups, including parents and health officials, indicating that providing an added incentive for students to attend class on a regular basis is a good idea, but offering exam exemptions could also encourage students to attend school when they are sick. Given the current H1N1 pandemic, this is a legitimate concern.

The issue has been discussed with our School Advisory Council as well as with all other principals in the HRSB high schools who also offer exemptions. We have all agreed, given the seriousness of the H1N1 pandemic, to cancel exam exemptions for the 2009-2010 school year.

I realize this decision will disappoint some of our students but it was only made after much thought and reflection on what was in the best interests of our students' and staff's health and safety. I hope that students who are not affected by H1N1 will still maintain exemplary attendance.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the administrative team.

Sincerely,

Terry Wadden,
Principal