Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy (SPVA)

SCHOOL HANDBOOK
2023-2024

LOCATION & CONTACT INFORMATION
STURGEON LEARNING CENTRE

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SPVA Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy

STURGEON PUBLIC VIRTUAL ACADEMY (SPVA)

At Sturgeon Public Schools we are dedicated to providing instruction to support the skills your child needs in order to be successful. The Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy was created as an option for families that would like to keep their children at home, while learning online in a high-quality education program.

Open to students in grades 5 - 9, Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy is a structured learning environment where students engage with their teacher(s) to learn the subject curriculum through an online medium. Although your child will be working from home, they will be able to build relationships with their teacher(s) and grade-level peers. Connections such as these are important for the health and wellbeing of children.

SPVA Vision, Mission and Values
Vision

Guiding students through innovative learning to grow and feel a sense of belonging.

Mission
To connect and grow through SPS online.

Values
Connect. Grow. Innovate. Belong

Program Format:

• Students will work as part of a grade-level cohort with an assigned online teacher(s). The format of instruction will include live online teacher instruction and teacher-directed activities and assignments.

• Students and teachers will be able to engage learning from anywhere, and all instruction and interaction with classmates will occur in an online environment. All instruction is provided by Alberta certificated teachers and will follow the complete Alberta Program of Studies.

• **Synchronous Learning** - This is the live online learning portion of the day. These times of the day will be similar to a regular school day but will be delivered through Google Meet. Your child's teacher will communicate the times during which Synchronous learning will occur.

• **Asynchronous Learning** - Learning activities that students complete independently. These times are similar to when students complete seatwork in class that the teacher has assigned to them. This may include watching videos, working on projects, or other assigned work.

Team:

Administration

• Sherri Devolder Principal
sdevolde@sturgeon.ab.ca

· Amy Greene Administrative Assistant
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Math / Science Department

● Candace McLean
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● Ben Jones
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● Dan Bisoo
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Humanities Department

● Christina Waller
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● Stephanie Wood
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Option Courses

● Christina Waller
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Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy- What learning looks like:

Students will take part in online classes and daily learning activities, including both synchronous and asynchronous learning. The length of these activities will depend on the grade (or division). Students must be available to connect with their teacher every day, during regular school hours. Students will also be expected to complete asynchronous learning activities during times they are not engaged with the teacher.

To support learning:

• Online courses will be delivered using Google Meet, Google Classroom, and Hapara.

• Teachers will provide engaging, curriculum-based lessons that require students to actively participate.

• Teachers will assess assignments and progress to support students and determine a final grade.

• Students will have access to individual or small group instruction—scheduled meetings between the teacher and small groups of students to check in on progress, complete assessments and provide feedback to students.

• SPVA will follow the Division's School Year Calendar. Support for learning from our teaching staff will occur between 8:25 am to- 3:05 on school days. Communication with teachers outside these hours will receive a response during the school day.

• Teaching will follow the provincial Program of Studies. This outlines the learning outcomes—statements about knowledge or skills that Alberta Education requires all students to learn and demonstrate.

Individual Program Plans (IPP's):

Individual Program Plans (IPPs) may be created should a student require additional support. These documents will be a collaborative task where teachers, parents and students work together. IPP goals will include skills that can be either achieved and monitored in an online learning environment or may include skills/goals that are monitored and supported while working in a home environment. Our Special Education Coordinator and parents will review the IPP at various times throughout the school year.

Counselor:

Students at SPVA will be able to make appointments with our counselor to meet virtually one-on-one to discuss anything from school academic difficulties, seeking support for peer challenges or issues that are related to school and life as a student.

Grades 7-9
Minimum daily requirements for student learning

• 8:30 am to 3:00 pm are the hours the teacher will be available to students. Including a 15 minutes morning break and a 35 minute break for lunch.

• Daily schedule - each class will meet with their online teacher(s) daily.

• Synchronous learning – students will meet with their online teacher(s) daily. Teachers will communicate via email, when these times occur via a monthly newsletter.

• Asynchronous learning - students will engage in learning activities, similar to homework, throughout the day with caregiver support.

• Teachers may ask students to meet for small group and individual instructions as needed •

Teachers will follow the learning outcomes from Alberta Education's Programs of Study.

Assessment:

Throughout the school year, students will be assessed on the outcomes from the Program of Studies. Teachers will be using both formative and summative assessments to measure student understanding of concepts. Teachers will share assessment procedures with students and parents to ensure opportunities to demonstrate learning is fair and equitable.

Students in Grades 5-9 will be assessed through reading tools such as the Fountas & Pinnel benchmark system and through Math assessments such as the MIPI. These assessments are to determine the reading and math skills of all students to help teachers program appropriately for student needs.

Students in Grade 6 and 9 will be required to write the Provincial Achievement Tests at the end of their academic year. These tests will be administered in-person.

Monthly Field Trips:

The Virtual Academy plans monthly filed trips to enhance learning and are an important part of the academic experience. Students are representing the Virtual Academy when in the community. Our expectation is that students represent themselves and their school with the level of conduct communicated in the Student Code of Conduct.

SPVA Code of Student Conduct
https://www.sturgeon.ab.ca/board/procedures/4717"

Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy recognizes its responsibility to maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environment. In the interim of the school working together with students, parents/guardians, the school council and staff to develop a formal Code of Student Conduct, the following shall apply:

1. Students and their parents/guardians, as partners in education, have the responsibility to: ➢

attend school regularly and punctually:

• For synchronous learning time, this means cameras are on when the teacher is talking or the class is discussing, and microphones are off unless actively speaking.
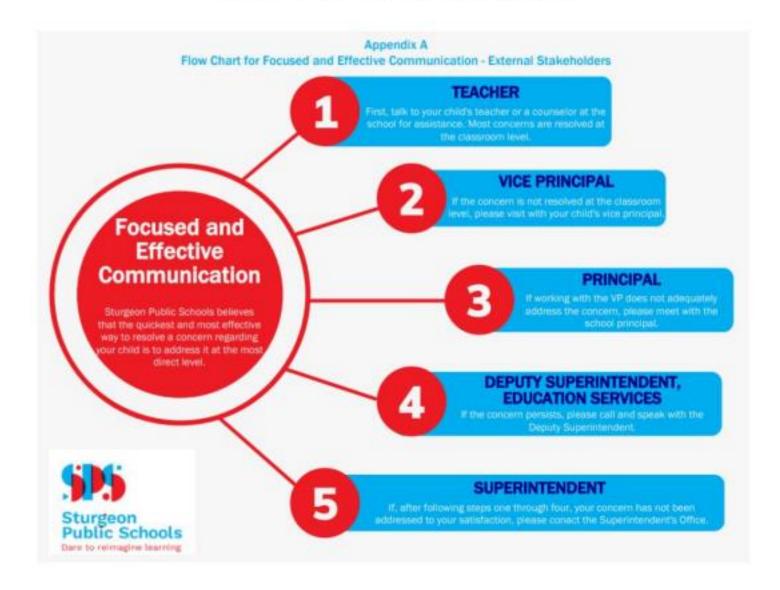
• ensure the student is ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education; including completion of assignments and homework,

• ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,

• respect the rights of others in the school,

• refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school during the school day or by electronic means,

• be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct,

• fully cooperate with school authority and personnel authorized to provide educational programs and other services throughout the school day and during all school sponsored activities and beyond the hours of school operation if that behavior or conduct has a connection back to the school and a demonstrated detrimental impact on the welfare of individual students, and

• positively contribute to the student's school and community

2. Students will be held responsible and accountable to Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy for unacceptable behaviour whether it occurs during the school day or by electronic means.

3. Beyond school hours students will be held responsible for unacceptable behaviour if that behaviour has a connection back to the school and has a demonstrated detrimental impact on the welfare of other students or staff.

4. Consequences including intervention, suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion from school may be imposed when a student fails to meet the expectations for student conduct.

Staff are committed to supporting students achieve this conduct by:

1. Help the student identify inappropriate behaviour(s)

2. Help the student solve the problem(s) created by these behaviour(s)

3. Respect the student's dignity.

4. Share the Code of Conduct with students twice annually, in September and January.

5. Make the Code of Conduct accessible to families by sending out electronically in September and posting on the school website for easy access.

Factors such as age, grade, nature of the misbehaviour, degree of the situation, emotional stability, and past history will be considered when action is taken.

Appendix A
Flow Chart for Focused and Effective Communication - External Stakeholders

Focused and Effective Communication

Sturgeon Public Schools believes that the quickest and most effective way to resolve a concern regarding your child is to address it at the most direct level.

1 TEACHER
First, talk to your child's teacher or a counselor at the school for assistance. Most concerns are resolved at the classroom level.

2 VICE PRINCIPAL
If the concern is not resolved at the classroom level, please visit with your child's vice principal.

3 PRINCIPAL
If working with the VP does not adequately address the concern, please meet with the school principal.

4 DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT, EDUCATION SERVICES
If the concern persists, please call and speak with the Deputy Superintendent.

5 SUPERINTENDENT
If, after following steps one through four, your concern has not been addressed to your satisfaction, please conact the Superintendent's Office.

SPS Sturgeon Public Schools
Dare to reimagine learning

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities in Online Education:

As parents you are an important part of your child's education team, especially while your child is working in an online format. While working at home with your child you will have a lot of influence as they shape their attitude toward the importance of their education. As parents of a SPVA student, you will be in charge of supervising your child's learning throughout the day. Parents are to be present in the home during the school day should the child need help with attending their online class or if an emergency occurs.

The following are suggestions that will assist your child in building a positive attitude toward school and develop good work habits as the year progresses.

• See that your child is prepared to do their best by having a proper amount of sleep, nutritious food, and a proper work space.

o A proper work space should be a space that is well lit, distraction free, and is stocked with the supplies and resources they need to work productively.

o Students will need to have a computer, a headset (to help block out environmental noise) and a reliable internet connection. Their computer must have a camera and microphone, or a webcam with a microphone attached.

• Assist your child in building a daily routine which will include:

o attending their synchronous learning times (Google Meets) regularly and on time. Keep the school informed of any absences.

o using their asynchronous time to complete their assignments.

o assist your child with staying engaged in their studies. It can be easy for a child to get distracted by other technology such as video games, Youtube, etc

• Support your child in the completion of their assignments. Parents must be careful to avoid completing the work for their child/children. Children should be allowed the opportunity to go through the process of learning a concept, which may involve some struggle to master concepts.

o take the opportunity to check over your child's assignments to make sure they have completed the assignment to the best of their ability, and submitted their work by the due date.

o If your child does not understand a concept encourage them to reach out to their teacher for assistance.

o Keep open communication with your child's teacher.

o Follow your child's progress in PowerSchool.

• Consequences are part of learning. Please help your child learn from their mistakes by supporting staff response to behaviors your child may display.

• Please read the following link from Alberta Education that provides parents with information for each grade level. My Child's Learning: A Parent Resource

• Please check out the following link that provides information specifically to online learning in Alberta, information on digital citizenship and online learning readiness https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9781460139431

• The following link is a resource to help parents become savvy with the internet and learn why this is important .http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/internetsafety/internetsavvy.html

Bullying, Harassing, Discriminatory and Aggressive behaviours

A welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment for all students and school staff will be one that is free from bullying, harassing, discrimination or violent behaviour. To achieve this at our school all students, staff, parents, and guests will;

• Model respectful conduct, inclusive behaviour and an understanding and appreciation for diversity, equity and human rights.

• Refrain from, report and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of school hours or electronically.

• Inform an adult you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other safety concerns in the school.

When concerns arise relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, aggressive behavior, or conflict it is expected that students, staff, parents, and guests will communicate directly with the authority most closely involved. This staff member will investigate and respond to the concern promptly. They will also relate the incident and any actions carried out to our school administration.

What is Bullying?
Bullying: repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.

What Bullying is Not:
Bullying behaviour is not the same as hurting someone's feelings if there is no misuse of power or a deliberate intent to cause harm. Bullying behaviour is sometimes confused with conflict. Conflict is a disagreement about different beliefs, ideas, feelings or actions.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights

All students, staff, parents, and guests share responsibility for proactively creating and maintaining welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and inclusive learning environments that acknowledge and promote understanding, respect and the
recognition of the diversity, equity, inclusion and human rights of all students and families within the school community.

Any language or behavior that degrades, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination and harassment towards students, staff, or families on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression will not be tolerated. Student offences will be dealt with as outlined
in our Code of Student Conduct. Parents, community members, or other guests at the school who engage in this behavior or language will be dealt with directly by school administration and may be asked to leave online gatherings or meetings.

Each year, Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy staff will evaluate our websites, learning resources, and our common practices to ensure they support the safety, health, well-being and educational needs of students who identify as, or are perceived to be,
gender minorities. We will also strive to promote critical thinking and include age-appropriate materials that accurately reflect the diversity of Canada's sexual and gender minority families, cultures, and communities.

SPVA Dress Code and Study Area Guidelines

In keeping with the philosophy of Alberta Education, we at Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy strive to help our students become productive citizens who are ready to pursue high school and eventually careers in the workforce. As a result, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect and to dress appropriately for a school/work setting.

The Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy Dress Code and Study Area Guidelines promotes safety and learning at school and includes the following expectations:

• Students must not wear clothing that has inappropriate language, graphics or slogans (i.e. depicts sexually suggestive expressions or actions, profanity, obscenity, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, or which degrade the integrity of individual groups).

• Students are expected to dress in good taste, with integrity as the guiding principle.

• Student work environments visible through a camera during online instruction must also not display posters or items that have inappropriate language, graphics or slogans as outlined above.

• The final determination about appropriateness of dress or work environment lies with school staff.

Acceptable Use Policy for Technology

Students must follow Policies and Procedures
which outlines the expectations for students while working within Sturgeon Public Schools' Network Resources.

Students may use additional wireless Personal Electronic Devices (PED) once they and their parents/guardians have agreed to the policies stated in the Personal Electronic Device Agreement. Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy is not responsible for any loss or damage sustained to personal electronic devices.

During synchronous learning times and during assessments, cell phones are not permitted in class. It is requested that students store their additional PEDs away from their work space during class time unless they are requested by the teacher to have them available for educational purposes. Engaging in game playing or social networking during class time is prohibited unless directed by a teacher and in the pursuit of educational outcomes.

Cyber Bullying is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Any incidents of cyber bullying will be dealt with according to the school code of conduct and discipline policy.

Discipline Policy and Guidelines

All discipline situations are seen as a learning opportunity for students. Staff will be sure to use a restorative approach when dealing with students, and respect the dignity of the child.

When dealing with breaches to our Code of Student Conduct, inappropriate behaviour is generally categorized according to three levels of severity with appropriate possible consequences.

Level One

Infractions may include:

• Google Classroom / Meet misbehaviour • Neglect of homework • Tardiness to Meets • Disrespect	• Dress code or work environment violation • Misuse of language • Misuse of electronic devices • Screen capture or picture of others without permission.

Possible actions that may be taken:

• A staff member will help the students be made aware of the proper behavior.

• A teacher gives logical consequence for a student's action, e.g. a student who is late is asked to make up the time at noon.

• A teacher contacts parents to involve them.

• The student and teacher create a plan to correct the undesirable behavior. • The student is

removed from a Meet to calm down or reflect.

If infractions continue to occur, the teacher may repeat interventions or refer the child to counselling or administration.

Level Two

Infractions may include:

• Bullying • Verbal abuse (profanity/threats) • Retribution against any person who has intervened to prevent or report bullying • Defiance of authority	• Posting images from school on social media without permission • Academic dishonesty • Repetitive or persistent Level One misbehaviour

Possible actions that may be taken:

• Any action from Level One.

• The student is referred to administration.

• Administration will contact parents to involve them.

• Referral to counseling.

• A misconduct report is completed.

• 1 - 5 day in-school or out-of-school suspension. For in-school, the student will be expected to connect in one-on-one Meets with a teacher, counselor or school administrator throughout the day.

Level Three

Infractions may include:

• Harassment • Possession or use of e cigarettes, vaping equipment, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs • Skipping Meets • Repetitive or persistent Level Two Level behaviours	• Non-compliance (open opposition to authority , refusal to comply, work, or open disrespect) • Sharing sexualiy explicit texts, images, or video

Possible actions that may be taken:

• Any action from Level One or Two.

• 1 - 5 day school suspension.

• Referral to appropriate agencies for counselling.

• R.C.M.P. will be involved in any illegal activity.

• Possible recommendation for expulsion.

All students who are suspended out of school are required to meet with an administrator or counselor prior to being readmitted to school.

School Council

The Sturgeon Public Virtual Academy School Council is a group of caring parents and school staff who work as a team dedicated to playing a supportive role in our children's education. It is open to all parents who would like to see their children succeed in their learning as well as a chance to establish a constructive relationship with the teachers and principal. The school council is involved in various activities throughout the school year.

Parent communication is conducted through the SPVA website and PowerSchool. These will be updated with important dates, upcoming events, school council dates, school board news, and school contact information.

The School Council executive is formed in fall each year at the Annual General Meeting. School Council meetings are held online, once a month, and are open to all. We'd love to see you there. Please watch in the school newsletters for dates and times and/or refer to our website for school council dates https://www.sturgeonpva.ca/

School Calendar - www.sturgeon.ab.ca