

# Sycamore High School FAQ's



## What is the Sycamore High School PE Readiness Program?

The Sycamore High School PE Readiness program is inspired by the book *Spark* by John Ratey. Dr. Ratey has gathered extensive research on how exercise stimulates brain function. SHS has asked 20 incoming freshmen, (with the help of middle school teachers), to be a part of our program. Students will begin the day with a zero-hour PE class. The class will run from 7:10-7:50. During this early morning PE class, it is important that the students workout for at least 20-25 minutes at 80% of their optimal heart rate. Research has shown there is a direct link between optimal learning directly after exercise. After the zero hour PE class, students will go to their math class for 1<sup>st</sup> period and English class during 2<sup>nd</sup> period. At the end of the day they will have a more structured study hall called Choices. Research has shown dramatic increases in attention/motivation, impulsivity, more positive mood, and overcoming helplessness. These benefits will help a student with test scores and improve school discipline. For further information, please download the power point created by Mark Mannebach, Sycamore Middle School or visit Dr. Ratey's website at:  
<http://www.johnratey.com/newsite/index.html>

## What is the parent portal and how do I use it?

Please click on the link <http://www.syc427.org/portal/index.html>. If you are unsure of your child's id number, you can contact the school to receive it. This number can also be found on your student's schedule, progress report, and may be known by your student since it is the number they use at school to access the computers. Please contact the Technology Department at [helpdesk@syc427.org](mailto:helpdesk@syc427.org) if you have any questions.

## What do parents need to know about driver's education?

District #427 shall provide the classroom driver education course for each public and non-public high school resident of the school district who either has received a passing grade in at least eight courses during the previous two semesters or has received a waiver of that requirement from the county superintendent of schools. In addition, students must have achieved sophomore standing.

## What do parents need to know about Online Learning?

Online learning is a self-paced, computer-based curriculum that is in alignment with all state standards. Due to the states graduation requirements, student failures can easily prevent a delay in graduation. Second semester freshmen through seniors that have failed a graduation requirement are eligible to take a class through this program.

When a student has failed a required class, parents, students, student-teacher assistance team members, or other school personnel, may make a request to a student's guidance counselor to register for the program with the online learning coordinator. Parent contact will be made by phone, mail, or in person to discuss the appropriateness of the referral, the program fees involved, and the class that the student will be enrolled in. There are no special education services or accommodations provided in this self-directed, individualized program.

The program will be offered on-site and all tests and quizzes will only be completed during online learning times. Students that have a study hall in their schedule may take the class during that time. Students that do not have a study hall may take online learning on Saturday morning sessions (a 7-week schedule will be given upon registration and payment of class fee). Students attending during regular school hours cannot have more than one unexcused absence or they will be assigned a study hall and have to finish the program during the Saturday online learning sessions or during online learning summer school (non-refundable fees apply- \$100 per class during the school year or \$200 per class in the summer program). When students complete a class they are dismissed from the program assigned a study hall or sent home from their Saturday or summer session.

Students will be removed without a fee refund for violations in technology policies, attendance violations, disruptive behavior to the learning environment, failure to engage in the program, or administration's discretion. All school policies and procedures apply during this program. The attendance office will contact parents if any of these problems jeopardize the student's enrollment.

Please ask the online learning coordinator if there is a question about the curriculum level and skills needed to be successful in the program or a specific class.

## When and how many school dances are scheduled throughout the school year? What are the protocols and expectations at these dances?

The school will hold six dances per year:

1. Back-to-school dance on August 29<sup>th</sup>, from 7-10 pm

2. Homecoming dance on September 29<sup>th</sup>, from 7-10 pm
3. Turkey Toe dance on November 16<sup>th</sup>, from 7-10 pm
4. Grub dance on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 8-11 pm.
5. Turnabout dance on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 7-10 pm.
6. Prom on May 18.

The organizational sponsor for each dance will be determined at the annual Activities Calendar meeting held in April each year.

The sponsor has full responsibility for all dances and must have a minimum of six chaperones (exclusive of administrators and themselves) assigned to each dance, or the dance will not be held. The sponsor must also be present. The sponsor is also responsible for obtaining and paying for a police officer for each dance. A minimum of one administrator will be assigned to each dance. Dances admit only Sycamore High School students with the exception of Homecoming, Turnabout and Prom. **If a student wishes to bring a guest to Homecoming, Turnabout or Prom the student must register the guest a minimum of one day prior to the dance with a “Guest Pass” form available in the main office.** This form must be on file in the main office. The maximum age for a guest is 20 years of age.

Dances are open to all eligible Sycamore High School students (Freshmen through Senior), with the exception of Prom. Prom is open only to Juniors and Seniors; and they must sign-up and attend as a couple.

All dances, with the exception of the Turkey Toe, Valentine Grub Dance, and Prom will start at 7:00 pm and will end at 10:00 pm. The Valentine Grub Dance and Prom will end at 11:00 pm. Once a student leaves a dance, the student may not return. **Every student must display a valid school ID in order to be admitted to a dance.** Students must arrive before the designated time to end admission to the dance, which is one half-hour after the scheduled start time.

## What is the PSAE?

The Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) measures the achievement of grade 11 students in reading, mathematics, science, and writing.

The PSAE includes two components: (1) an ISBE-developed science assessment, and (2) two Work Keys assessments (Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information).

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/psae.htm>

## What is the privilege pyramid and how can it affect my child?

### PSAE Incentives

If a student **meets or exceeds** in all **four** subject areas on the PSAE or **makes or exceeds** the **normal progress** expected on the ACT Test, the following opportunities will be offered to the student:

1. No finals for first semester class(es).
  - Must have a “A” average in the class.

- No discipline referrals 1<sup>st</sup> semester senior year.
  - No fines owed at the time of finals.
2. Open campus during study hall second semester senior year
- Must have successfully passed all classes in the previous semester.
  - No discipline referrals in the previous semester.
  - No fines owed.
  - Privilege may be revoked if student receives a discipline referral first or second semester or accumulates fines.
  - Must have parental permission.
3. Senior privilege transition study hall.
- Must have successfully passed all classes in the previous semester.
  - No discipline referrals in the previous semester.
  - No fines owed.
  - Privilege may be revoked if student receives a discipline referral first or second semester or accumulates fines.
4. Drawing for one of 5 free reserved parking spots with an individualized name plate.
- Privilege may be revoked if student receives a discipline referral or accumulates fines during the school year.
5. Drawing for free homecoming tickets (10 pairs will be drawn).
- No discipline referrals in the previous or current semester.
  - No fines owed.
6. Drawing for free Prom Tickets (5 Pairs will be drawn).
- No discipline referrals first or second semester before Prom.
7. Free Pizza party

### How do I get information on the ACT?

The ACT® test assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work.

1. The multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science.
2. The Writing Test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay.

For more information on the ACT, please visit <http://www.act.org/aap/>

### How do I go about taking my child to a college visit?

College visits will be considered "absences with valid cause" (with prior notice given and administrative approval); however, they are included in the total **absence policy**.

Sycamore School District strongly encourages parents to plan vacations to coincide with

the school calendar so as to avoid taking valuable educational time away from their students. Students who know in advance that they will be absent from school for vacation must check with the Attendance Office. **The student must request a Vacation Request Form in advance from the Attendance Office. Once the Vacation Request Form has been completed by the student and teachers, it should be returned to the Attendance Office at least 24 hours prior to the visit.** A phone call from the parent is required either prior to or at this time to verify the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to inform teachers prior to the absence. Failure to follow the vacation absence policy may prohibit a student from receiving credit for work missed. **All work should be turned in prior to absence or at teacher discretion.**

### My child has a collaborative class. What is a collaborative class and how will it benefit my child?

A collaborative class has one regular education teacher and one special education teacher. Both teachers are actively working together to foster student learning in the least restrictive environment through the utilization of a variety of teaching and learning styles. Some of the benefits your child will receive are:

1. Strong emphasis on learning skills, organization, and preparedness.
2. Opportunities for leadership through peer tutoring.
3. More contact time with teachers for school and personal issues.
4. Enhanced sense of responsibility.
5. Diverse learning techniques available.
6. Better understanding of students with different disabilities.

### How does my child get a work permit?

Mrs. Gones has the Illinois Department of Labor Employment Certificate. The certificates are valid for one year under specific conditions. Under the Federal Child Labor Law (As provided by the Fair Labor Standards Act- Section 3, 52 Stat. 1060, as amended; 29 U.S.C. 203).

#### 14 and 15 Year Old Minors May Not Be Employed:

1. During school hours, except as provided for under the Work Experience and Career Exploration Program.
2. Before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. except 9 p.m. from June 1 through Labor Day.
3. More than 3 hours a day-on-school days.
4. More than 18 hours a week-in-school weeks.
5. More than 8 hours a day-on-non-school days.
6. More than 40 hours a week-in-non-school weeks.

#### 14 and 15 Year Old Minors May Not Be Employed In:

1. Any manufacturing occupation.
2. Any mining occupation.
3. Processing occupations.

4. Occupations requiring the performance of any duties in workrooms or workplaces where goods are manufactured, mined, or otherwise processed.
5. Public messenger service.
6. Operation or tending or hoisting apparatus or of any power-driven machinery.
7. Any occupations found and declared to be hazardous.
8. Occupations in connection with transportation, warehousing and storage, communications, public utilities, and construction.

\*\*If you need any more information, please contact Lauranna Gones in the main office at Sycamore High School.

## Parking

**Parking on Sycamore High School property is a privilege offered to eligible students.** SENIORS and JUNIORS and eligible sophomores will be permitted to park on campus. Students will be required to purchase a parking tag and will be expected to strictly adhere to the regulations regarding the parking of their vehicles. Violations of parking regulations will not be tolerated. Parking tags will not be necessary during weekends, evenings, or school holidays.

### **PARKING REGULATIONS**

All eligible students wishing to park in designated school parking areas during the school day must:

1. Purchase a parking tag.
2. Display parking tag as directed.
3. Park only in authorized parking place or area.

**Students are prohibited from parking in the following areas: staff spots, visitor spots, reserved spots, spots with no number, the Salem Lutheran Church parking lot, areas that are not designated as parking spots.**

4. Obey all sign regulations.
5. Park head-in direction only.
6. Not park in yellow areas or fire zones.
7. Not sit in parked cars.
8. Obey 15 mph speed limit on school grounds.
9. Courteously follow parking and driving directions of school supervisory personnel.

**It is the student's responsibility to make sure that he or she understands and obeys all parking regulations.**

### **PARKING VIOLATIONS**

Tickets will be issued in the following manner:

**First Violation:** Warning letter sent home indicating that a second violation will result in a \$10 fine and that a third violation will result in a \$20 fine. Should a fourth violation follow, the student will lose his/her parking privileges for the remainder of the year.

**Second Violation:** A ticket issued with a fine of \$10. A warning letter will be sent home indicating that a third violation will result in a \$20 fine, and a fourth violation will cause the student to lose his/her parking privileges for the remainder of the year.

**Third Violation:** A ticket issued with a fine of \$20. A building administrator or designee warns the student that a fourth violation will result in the loss of parking privileges for the remainder of the year. A letter is sent home indicating that this is the final warning.

**Fourth Violation:** Loss of parking/tag privileges.

Students parking on campus without a parking tag may receive disciplinary action ranging from one full day in the Alternative Education Program to loss of permit privileges for the following year. Cars without parking tags may be towed at owner's expense. Students who drive recklessly will receive disciplinary action.

**THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO TOW AT OWNER'S EXPENSE ANY CAR IN VIOLATION OF PARKING REGULATIONS.**

**STUDENTS DRIVING TO SYCAMORE HIGH SCHOOL MUST ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING RULES:**

1. The speed limit on school grounds is 15 miles per hour NO CARELESS, RECKLESS, OR HAZARDOUS DRIVING WILL BE TOLERATED, AND PROPER PARKING IS REQUIRED.
2. Students may park only in assigned student areas (numbered spaces) and must park in a forward direction. PARKING IN THE FACULTY SPACES AT ANY TIME DURING THE SCHOOL DAY IS NOT PERMITTED. ONLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS MAY USE MARKED AREAS.
3. Students are to keep their vehicles locked at all times. THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST, STOLEN, AND/OR DAMAGED PROPERTY.
4. Students are not to sit in a car during the school day or during any school activity. Students are to leave their cars immediately after parking in the student lot and enter the building.
5. Once school buses have started to move, no cars are allowed to cut in between buses and/or pass buses on the high school grounds.
6. Vehicles in noncompliance with registration policy WILL BE TOWED AT THE OWNER'S EXPENSE.
7. BY ENTERING SCHOOL PROPERTY OR DESIGNATED SCHOOL PARKING AREAS, THE PERSON DRIVING ANY VEHICLE IS DEEMED TO CONSENT TO COMPLETE SEARCH OF THE VEHICLE BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS OR POLICE.

## Open vs. Closed Campus

A closed campus primarily means students are not able to leave campus for lunch or during a study hall. Students would be required to remain on campus during the duration of the school day, unless there was a field trip or appointments.

Open campus refers to students being able to leave the main campus during lunch and during a study hall. There are parameters that students need to meet to be eligible. Open

campus during a study hall is second semester of the school year and for seniors. Seniors must also meet the following criteria:

- a. Must have successfully passed all classes in the previous semester.
- b. No discipline referrals in the previous semester.
- c. No fines owed.
- d. Privilege may be revoked if you receive a discipline referral first or second semester or accumulate fines.
- e. Must have parental permission.

**\*\*Open campus during lunch can be revoked if students do not adhere to the discipline policy of SHS and/or at administration discretion.**

### What are some homework tips for parents?

1. **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place where studying and quiet reading can occur.** Avoid having your child do homework with the TV on or in a place with other distractions, such as people coming and going. Monitor the use of the telephone and computer, including the Internet.
2. **Make sure the resources your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary are available.** Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
3. **Establish a routine time for homework and special projects and allow for balanced leisure activities.** Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let the child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with other classmates. Help your child participate in activities outside of school also.
4. **Be positive about homework.** Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
5. **When your child does homework, you do homework.** Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.
6. **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.** Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.
7. **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.** Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team. Follow the direction given by the teacher.
8. **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.** Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong skills.
9. **Stay informed.** Talk with your child's teachers. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.
10. **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.** Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he or she will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.



11. **Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.** Let your child take a short break if he or she is having trouble concentrating on an assignment.

12. **Encourage games and leisure time activities that require reasoning, computations, and problem-solving skills.** Allow your child to participate in building things, fixing things, and related tasks.

*Adapted from: American School Counselor Association (ASCA).*

13. **Are there any online resources I can use to help my student?** Yes! There are many great online resources that are free. One of the best resources out there for math, science, and any other class is through the Kahn Academy. Videos of the instructor can be found for free on Youtube.

## Final Exams

Final exams for the 2012-2013 school year, will be held on December 19, 20, and 21. Periods 1, 2, and 3 will be given on December 19. Periods 4 and 5 will be given on December 20. Periods 6 and 7 will be given on December 21. Once students have completed their finals, they are free to leave campus. For students who ride the bus, regular bus pick up times will continue for these days.

## Can my child take honors/AP/gifted courses?

### AP & Specialized

#### Course Admission Determination

**Philosophy:** Because of the high demand for admission into AP/Specialized courses, it has become necessary to develop an admissions policy in order to control class sizes. The goal will be to cap these type of courses at 25 students.

#### Freshmen Year

1. Determined on middle school GPA in course specific area or department policy.
2. Next determining factor will be overall GPA
3. Next determining factor will be course specific Explorer test result
4. Next determining factor shall be comprehensive Explorer test results

#### Sophomore, Junior & Senior Class AP/Specialized Class Placement Determination

1. All things being equal the person with the highest number of credits shall receive priority.

2. When not equal, the following shall apply:

A. Determined on high school GPA in course specific area or department policy.

B. Next determining factor will be overall GPA

C. Next determining factor will be course specific standardized test result from most recently scored test.

D. Next determining factor shall be comprehensive standardized test results from most recently scored test.

\*\*\*Determination for class admission shall be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.\*\*\*

It is the (guidance, dept, individual teachers) responsibility to check qualifications and develop a list in rank order for each class.

## Music Boosters/Sports Boosters Contacts

If you are looking to become a part of the Sycamore boosters team, please contact the

following people in the area you would wish to help.

***Sports Boosters***

[www.sycamoresportsboosters.com](http://www.sycamoresportsboosters.com)

***Music Boosters***

[www.sycamoremusicboosters.com](http://www.sycamoremusicboosters.com)