



Plan for Learning & Assessment During the Cancellation of Classes

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents & Guardians

We are now well into our new way of learning, teaching and living during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope your family is healthy and adjusting to our 'new normal'. Understanding that there are many questions around ongoing student learning, we hope this document will provide some answers for you.

1. How much time should my child be spending on learning activities assigned by the school?

Alberta Education has set out the following guidelines for the amount of learning activities teachers should assign:

- Elementary (K-6) about 5 hours assigned per week
- Junior High (7-9) about 10 hours per week
- High School (10-12) about 3 hours per 5 credit course (will be more for those students in the quarter system)

We recognize that families may experience a variety of challenges in achieving these guidelines every week, so the ability to complete all work as assigned may vary from week to week and family to family. We expect all students to be trying their very best to complete all of the learning activities assigned. Students who have ISPs can expect those plans to be considered when learning activities are assigned and teachers will continue to work with parents around necessary adjustments along the way.

2. Since the Minister of Education said that all students who were on track to progress to the next grade will do so, does my child still need to do anymore 'work'?

Yes, they do. The government expects that all students, regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic status, will continue to learn during the cancellation of in-school classes. Healthy, capable students with support at home are expected to continue their studies. It is important that students settle into a regular routine to support physical and mental wellness, as well as continue to engage in learning in order to be best prepared for the next grade/course in the Fall.

3. We have a lot going on in our family and I feel a lot of pressure about taking on teaching my children at home. How am I supposed to manage this?

The health and well-being of your family is top priority and we understand there are many challenges facing families during this unusual time. Your child's teacher and school can provide support in many different ways and can work with you to establish a manageable routine for your family. Alberta's government does intend for every student to continue learning for the rest of the school year, but what that looks like for your family may be different from others.

4. Will my child be tested on the work that is sent home from their teacher(s)? If so, how will that be done?

The focus will be on supporting ongoing learning, not evaluating or testing. The priority is to provide students with academic work and ensure learning continues to the greatest degree possible. We want students to be as ready as possible for their next grade or courses. Teachers will be in contact with students regularly to check in and find out how students are doing with the learning activities. Teachers will be providing feedback to students in order to continue the learning process, not providing grades.

5. What will my child's report card look like at the end of the year? How will my child write their final exams?

Since the focus right now is on ongoing student learning, and not tests and evaluations, there will be no final exams. The province has also cancelled Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) and Diploma Exams. Your child's report card will likely look very different from previous terms/years, depending on their grade level.

Elementary (K-6):

The year-end report card will consist of comments and feedback specific to your child and the evidence of learning they have been able to demonstrate. Teachers have identified the most important curriculum outcomes to cover during this time, and comments will reflect learning with regards to these. Comments and indicators of areas of success and growth will be focused on literacy, numeracy and Religion. Many of the outcomes in these areas are continuously assessed throughout the year, and may therefore not be unique to the time when classes have been cancelled. Feedback shared in the final report card will help to support your child's transition to next year, as well.

Junior High (7-9):

The year-end report card for students in junior high school will not consist of percentage-based marks for the learning that has occurred since March 13th (the last day of in-person classes). Teachers will assign 'Pass' or 'Incomplete' for the units/strands that have been the focus of learning during the cancellation of classes. Teachers have identified the most important curriculum outcomes to cover during this time, and comments will reflect learning with regards to these. Comments and indicators of areas of success and growth will be focused on Language Arts, Math, Social, Science and Religion. Any percentage marks on the final report will be reflective of learning and assessments that were completed prior to March 13, 2020.

High School (10-12):

High Schools will continue, where possible, to provide percentage marks for courses as assessed or evaluated by the school to support students using these percentage marks within their high school transcript for scholarships, post-secondary and employment purposes. Communication with your child's teacher/administrator will be imperative if it becomes difficult, for any reason, for your child to complete the courses they are currently enrolled in so as to not negatively impact their high school program.

6. How will teachers be grading student work? Will online gradebooks continue to be updated regularly?

The focus right now is on supporting ongoing student learning, and not testing and evaluations. Students will complete learning activities designed specifically to address the essential outcomes for each subject area, and teachers will be working with students to provide feedback that will help students to improve and grow. It is very important that teachers are able to assess the work that students can complete independently. When students are not initially successful, they are given support, feedback and multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning. Although it is difficult to watch our children struggle through things, the struggle is where the learning happens! Allowing your children to show their teacher what they can do tells the teacher where they may need extra support and is very important to the learning process. Since teachers will be focusing on providing ongoing feedback to students, they will be moving away from entering percentage-based marks into a gradebook. The feedback provided will offer more opportunity for ongoing student learning. At any time you can check in with your child's teacher to understand where students are in their learning.

7. Since my child will probably miss several months of school, how will this affect their grade placement for the upcoming school year?

All students who were on track to progress to the next grade will progress. In cases where students were struggling, teachers are here to help them improve. We are in extraordinary times, and teachers fully understand that there will be varying levels of readiness when students return to school. We will take care of all of our students, meeting them where they are at academically when they return to school. High schools will be working closely with students to ensure progress towards graduation is not negatively impacted by the COVID-19 situation. Every effort will be made to support students to complete all coursework necessary for the completion of their high school programs.

8. What if I have a concern about my child and their learning?

We know that you and your family are trying your best to navigate this 'new normal', as student learning now looks very different. Should you have any concerns about your child's learning, your first point of communication should always be your child's teacher. From there, the teacher will work closely with you to problem-solve the situation and involve school administration, as necessary. On a rare occasion, there may be a need for the school administration to consult with specific personnel at the division level to further support student learning. It is important to be proactive and express concerns early with teachers directly in order to best support your child.

9. My child is experiencing a lot of anxiety right now. What can I do to help them?

This can be a very stressful time for everyone -- and it is perfectly natural for your child to be experiencing an increased amount of stress and anxiety. If you would like your child to speak with the school's Family & School Liaison Counsellor for support, please contact your child's teacher to make arrangements. The Kids Help Phone is an excellent resource for kids in crisis (1-800-668-6868). The Alberta Mental Health Helpline (1-877-303-2642) is also available 24 hours a day for anyone who needs support.