

**CODE:** GEH.AR**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (08-07-2025)**TOPIC:** At-home Learning in Emergencies**ISSUE DATE:** (08-07-2025)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2032)

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## OBJECTIVE

To communicate direction for the Division about the requirement to continue to provide an option for in-person learning when shifting to at-home learning, including during a declared public health emergency or state of emergency, in alignment with provincial statutes and regulations, as may be amended from time to time.

To provide direction for the Division related to temporarily shifting to at-home learning without the option for in-person learning, under Minister of Education exemptions and during specific emergency circumstances, in alignment with provincial statutes and regulations, as may be amended from time to time.

## DEFINITIONS

**At-home learning**, as defined by the *Education Act*, means teacher-directed education programming provided by a board to a student on a temporary basis at the student's residence or at a location other than the student's regularly attended school.

## RESPONSIBILITY

1. The Superintendent or designate is responsible to:
  - a. Authorize the shift to at-home learning with the continued option for in-person learning, including during a declared public health emergency or state of emergency, as outlined in Section A.1. of this regulation.
  - b. Authorize the temporary shift to at-home learning without the option for in-person learning in specific emergency circumstances, as outlined in Section A.2. of this regulation.
  - c. Notify the Minister of Education (Minister) when:
    - i. A shift to at-home learning without an in-person learning option is required for three consecutive school days or less.
    - ii. An in-person learning option resumes.
  - d. Request an exemption to the Alberta *In-person Learning Regulation* from the Minister when a shift to at-home learning without the option of in-person learning is reasonably necessary for more than three consecutive school days.
  - e. When at-home learning without the option for in-person learning is provided, communicate to principals the expectation to:
    - i. Make reasonable efforts to enable a student to continue with the same courses and education program that the student is enrolled in as of the date at-home learning begins, in cases when at-home learning is provided without an in-person learning option.
    - ii. Remain in adherence to Board policies and administrative regulations guiding inclusive education for all students, whether in-person or at-home.

- f. Authorize the temporary cancellation of classes in emergent unforeseen situations that prevent the delivery of classes, as outlined in Section A.3. of this regulation.
  - g. Approve an alternate in-person learning location in cases when it becomes unsafe or infeasible to continue in-person learning in the building where students regularly attend school, as outlined in Section B.2. of this regulation.
2. The Principal is responsible to:
- a. Track student attendance, whether in-person or at-home.
  - b. Enable students participating in at-home learning to have equitable access to necessary technology and learning materials.

## REGULATION

In accordance with the *Education Act* and its associated regulations:

- The provincial requirements outlined in this regulation apply to instructional programming provided for students in Grades 1 to 12.
  - The Superintendent is responsible for decisions related to early childhood services programs, including Kindergarten.
  - The Division may not deny a student access to in-person learning if the student does not wear a face mask or any other face covering for the primary purpose of preventing or limiting the spread of any communicable disease as defined in the *Public Health Act*.
- A. SUPERINTENDENT AUTHORITY TO TEMPORARILY SHIFT TO AT-HOME LEARNING OR CANCEL CLASSES IN EMERGENCIES
1. In accordance with the *Education Act* and its associated regulations, the Superintendent or designate may authorize a shift to at-home learning for Division schools that offer or provide in-person learning for some or all of Grades 1 to 12, only if these schools continue to provide the option for in-person learning for each student for the same grades for which that school offers or provides at-home learning.
    - a. Clause A.1. applies during emergencies as described under Section 3.1(1) of the *Education Act*. These include, but are not limited to, a public health emergency or state of emergency declared under the *Public Health Act* or *Emergency Management Act*.
      - i. If there is any conflict or inconsistency with the direction in clause A.1. and the *Public Health Act* or the *Emergency Management Act*, the Division will follow provincial direction as per the *Public Health Act* or the *Emergency Management Act*, which may prevail over the *Education Act* and its associated regulations.
    - b. The Minister may, by order, exempt the Division from the requirement to provide in-person learning when providing the option for at-home learning, subject to any terms and considerations the Minister considers appropriate.
  2. In accordance with the *Education Act* and its associated regulations, the Superintendent or designate may authorize a shift to at-home learning without the option for in-person learning for some or all students, without an exemption order from the Minister, if:
    - a. There are emergency circumstances, not related to emergencies described in clause A.1., that threaten the safe operation of all or part of the building where students regularly attend school.
    - b. It is reasonably necessary to restrict access to all or part of the school building such that it is not reasonable to conduct in-person learning.
    - c. The provision of at-home learning is planned to be no more than three consecutive school days.

3. The Superintendent or designate may temporarily cancel classes without requesting an exemption from the Minister in unforeseen emergent situations, including but not limited to inclement weather or gas leaks, that require the temporary cancellation of classes.
  - a. Schools are required to maintain the minimum hours of instruction for their students as outlined in the *Alberta Guide to Education*.

**B. CONSIDERATIONS FOR WHETHER TO PROVIDE IN-PERSON AND/OR AT-HOME LEARNING DURING EMERGENCIES**

1. When deciding whether learning should be in-person, at-home or a combination of both, the Superintendent will consider the following factors:
  - a. Student safety.
  - b. Equitable access to learning.
  - c. Access to technology.
  - d. Types of programming being offered.
  - e. Availability of synchronous or asynchronous online learning.
  - f. Resources required, including funding and staff availability, to operate an in-person and/or at-home learning environment.
    - i. This may include the feasibility of combining classes or grades for instruction.
2. In cases when it is unsafe or infeasible to continue in-person learning in the building where students regularly attend school, the Division will strive to provide in-person learning opportunities in other Division buildings, where practical.
  - a. Principals and Central Decision Unit leaders will:
    - i. Work collaboratively to explore the feasibility of an alternate in-person learning location.
    - ii. Present findings to the Superintendent for approval.
    - iii. If there is a feasible alternate location, they will work collaboratively to implement the transition to this location.

**C. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TEMPORARY PROVISION OF AT-HOME LEARNING DURING EMERGENCIES**

1. The Superintendent or designate may not continue providing at-home learning without providing an in-person learning option for some or all students beyond three consecutive school days unless authorized by the Minister.
2. At-home learning will be provided in alignment with provincial requirements and, where applicable, in a student's Individual Program Plan (IPP), including maintaining:
  - a. Access to the minimum hours of instruction.
  - b. Adherence to curricular requirements, as set out by Alberta Education.
  - c. Processes that enable teachers to use their professional judgement to deliver instruction and evaluate student learning, relevant to curricular outcomes or a student's IPP goals.
  - d. Student supervision, which may be adapted in response to the new contexts and needs involved in at-home learning.
  - e. Access and support for students to participate in provincial assessments, subject to any deferment and exemption requirements outlined by Alberta Education.
3. Students participating in at-home learning will, when reasonable and feasible:

- a. Be provided with appropriate technology and have access to an online platform where learning resources and assignments can be accessed.
  - i. In cases when students cannot access an online platform, an alternative method to access materials will be provided (for example, provision of paper handouts).
- b. Be provided with learning resources that are responsive to individual learning needs.
- c. Have daily opportunities to connect with a staff member involved in supporting their learning.

## REFERENCES

DBC.BP - Emergency Plans  
DBC.AR - Operation of Schools in Emergency Circumstances  
DBC.B.AR - Fire and Evacuation Drill Procedures  
DBCC.AR - Bomb Threats  
DBCD.AR - Lockdowns and Lockdown Drill Procedures  
DK.BP - Division Technology  
DK.AR - Division Technology  
DKB.AR - Appropriate Use of Division Technology  
HA.BP - Inclusive Education  
HHFA.AR - Supervision of Students  
*Alberta Guide to Education*  
*Education Act*  
*In-person Learning Regulation, Alberta Regulation 13/2025*  
*Public Health Act*