

Emergency School Closure and Shift to Online Learning

BACKGROUND

The FEA Board recognizes that while continuity in learning is important to student achievement, the safety of students and staff is a primary consideration in determining how learning will be maintained in an emergency. The Board acknowledges the essential role of teacher instruction in providing students with established, evidence-based practices that support success in online learning.

DEFINITIONS

Emergency: means a situation such as a public health emergency or local public health emergency, a state of emergency or state of local emergency or any emergency as prescribed in an order of the minister of education under section 11.1(3) of the Education Amendment Act, 2024.

Non-routine Individual Health Measure: means temporary actions taken to address specific public health concerns that are not part of standard, ongoing public health practices (e.g. use of face masks).

RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent or delegate will contact their Alberta Education and Childcare field services manager or consultant to discuss the issue and potential request for exemption.

1. Upon approval of the request for exemption, the Superintendent or designate will notify parents regarding the approval for the school Principal to move a group, class, or grade of students to At-home Learning.
 - a. School authorities will not be required to get ministerial approval for shifts to at-home learning of three or fewer consecutive school days, as per the in-person Learning Regulation Exemption process.
2. The Principal will communicate with affected parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or students about supports that include but are not limited to:
 - a. Technology access and equipment for the online platform being used
 - b. Class schedule
 - c. Attendance expectations
 - d. Supports for learning needs such as those related to the Individual Program Plan or English as an Additional Language
 - e. Contact processes for additional assistance.

GUIDELINES

1. The following factors will be considered in decision making for in-person or at-home Learning:
 - a. The safety of the school building for students and staff;
 - b. Potential alternative site(s) for accommodating teaching and learning; c)
 - c. The type of education programming being offered, including the age of the students; d)
 - d. Providing equitable access to learning for all affected students; and

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- e. Availability of technology to support temporary at-home learning for those that do not have access;
2. When the school cannot be used due to an Emergency, FEA will consider the use of one or more alternate location(s) to temporarily accommodate students.
 - a. If moving learning to an alternate location is not feasible, FEA may temporarily shift to At-home Learning for a class, grade, or group of students.
 - b. FEA will notify the affected parent(s)/guardian(s)/independent students as soon as reasonably possible of a decision to shift to temporary At-home Learning.
3. Should a Non-Routine Individual Health Measure be required or recommended by the public health authority, FEA will:
 - a. Notify and obtain parent/guardian consent for students aged 15 and under; and/or
 - b. Notify parents/guardians of students aged 16 or older who are not independent students of the non-routine individual health measure.

FUSION AT-HOME LEARNING DAYS

1. Fusion Education Association designates single “at-home learning” days throughout the year. These days are designed to build student independence and competencies through:
 - a. Teacher-supported instruction in online learning.
 - b. Targeted career development tasks related to the FEA charter.

SHIFT TO AT-HOME LEARNING IN URGENT SITUATIONS

An FEA school will be closed for students, staff and visitors if conditions are deemed a risk to health and/or safety. Any of the following factors shall serve as guides for considering school closure or early dismissal of students:

- a. Loss of power and heat,
- b. Inadequate water supply and/or water that is not potable,
- c. Sewer back-up,
- d. Structural damage to the school building,
- e. Smoke,
- f. Severe weather including extremes in temperature, wind chill and air quality
- g. Other urgent situations.

An FEA school will shift to the At-Home Learning Process above should an urgent situation occur that is less than three days.

Shifts to at-home or online learning will be announced on the school website, social media platforms and by email. It is the parents' responsibility to watch and/or listen for these announcements and to make suitable arrangements for their children.

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Legal References

Education Amendment Act 2024

Approval and Review

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