

Schools shift to at-home learning in Calgary

April 14, 2021

Alberta Education has approved requests from public and Catholic schools in Calgary to temporarily shift Grades 7 to 12 to at-home learning.

Students in Grades 7 to 12 in the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School District will shift to at-home learning starting April 19 for two weeks.

Decisions to approve a school board's request to shift to at-home learning for operational considerations is based on four criteria:

- A chronic substitute teacher shortage.
- A significant number of students and staff in quarantine or isolation.
- Recent requests from the board for short-term shifts for a number of their schools.
- Substantial COVID-19 cases in the community.

“While everyone’s preference is to learn in school, some school boards are dealing with operational pressures due to rising COVID-19 cases in the community. The safety of students and staff is my top priority, which is why I am responding to the boards’ requests and respecting their autonomy. By having a clear process in place, we are giving them flexibility to move to at-home learning when necessary.”

Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education

“We are seeing a sharp rise in cases among school-aged Albertans, as well as those in other age groups. While this is an operational decision, I support it and ask that parents and students continue making safe choices to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Social activities outside of school can easily spread the virus, so please continue following all the health measures in place.”

Dr. Deena Hinshaw, chief medical officer of health

“We appreciate that the government has responded to our concerns. The greatest impacts of COVID-19 cases have been in the Grade 7-12 schools. Moving these students online will help to ensure learning continuity, address operational concerns and support the health and well-being of CBE students, staff and the Calgary community.”

Marilyn Dennis, board chair, Calgary Board of Education

“The Calgary Catholic School District welcomes this announcement from Alberta Education. While we recognize that face-to-face learning is always preferred, the safety of our staff and students must always be a priority, and moving temporarily to an online format for our Grades 7-12 students will support their health.

Recognizing that, along with the expansion of the rapid testing program, the ability to move to an online format are good strategies to support our schools.”

Mary Martin, board chair, Calgary Catholic School District

School boards can continue to request an entire school to move temporarily to at-home learning due to operational reasons and the province continues to work closely with school boards to support students and families. Decisions to move a portion of a school, such as one grade, continue to be at the discretion of the school board. To date, Alberta Health has not required any school closures for health reasons.

Alberta’s government is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by protecting lives and livelihoods with precise measures to bend the curve, sustain small businesses, and protect Alberta’s health-care system.

Quick facts

- Two school boards have been granted a temporary transition to at-home learning, effective Monday, April 19th: Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic Schools District (including schools in Airdrie and Cochrane).
- School boards will be in contact with their students, parents, teachers and staff with details regarding the transition.
- Students with disabilities in need of specialized supports can continue to learn and receive services in-person at school, regardless of the shifts to at-home learning.
- About 81 per cent of schools in Alberta currently don’t have alerts or outbreaks.
- Currently, nine schools are temporarily learning at-home/online due to operational considerations.
- Active cases related to schools amount to about 0.3 per cent of students and staff.

Related information

- [K-12 learning during COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 guidance and health measures for K-12 schools](#)

Media inquiries

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