2020-2021

School Re-Entry Plan

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2020-21 School Re-Entry Plan

The Minister of Education Adriana LaGrange announced on July 21, 2020 school authorities across Alberta will follow scenario 1 of the plan at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. That's a return to near normal operations with health measures.

Implementation of this School Re-Entry Plan is subject to change and direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is based on the best available information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan will evolve and be adjusted when new information becomes available as the status of the COVID-19 pandemic changes.

Alberta Education will continue to engage with our education partners as part of this important process.

This school re-entry plan for the Early Childhood Services (ECS) to Grade 12 (ECS-12) education system for the 2020-21 school year is part of the Alberta government's relaunch strategy that was announced on April 30, 2020.

This plan is founded on the following four principles that were established by government in collaboration with education partners.

- The safety of children, students and staff comes first.
- Children and student learning will continue.
- Provincial funding is still flowing to schools.
- School authorities have flexibility to do what is best for their community.

This plan balances the need for provincial direction and standardized approaches in some areas while also providing flexibility and respecting school authority autonomy at the local level.

As we approach the new school year, the direction provided in this draft plan will be updated as circumstances change. Alberta Education is committed to providing the final plan no later than August 1, 2020 to allow school authorities time to make any additional adjustments to their own planning for the new school year.

The school re-entry plan for ECS-12 schools considers three scenarios that could exist when the 2020-21 school year begins in September.

1) In-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)
2) In-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)
3) At-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

It is imperative that school authorities plan and prepare for all of these three non-mutually-exclusive scenarios as the COVID-19 pandemic may change at any time and school authorities may be required to transition from one scenario to another with short notice.

Alberta Education is collaborating with Alberta Health to create criteria/triggers for moving from one scenario to the next – depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in communities across the province.

For the upcoming 2020-21 school year, government expects that every child and student, regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic status, will continue to learn. This includes children and students in public, separate, Francophone, charter and independent schools, and Indigenous students attending provincial schools and independent ECS operators.

The Standards for Special Education define an inclusive education as one where a student with disabilities or who require specialized supports and services is included in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools as the first placement option. As multiple scenarios are developed for the upcoming school year during the global pandemic, there must be consideration and planning at each and every level for the inclusion of students with disabilities and the impact and potentially unique supports that will be required to ensure their success and full participation in all aspects of school life.

The global COVID-19 pandemic is an evolving and unprecedented situation that presents society and the education system with many challenges. Continuing children and student learning in fall 2020 will require everyone in the ECS-12 education system to be nimble in contributing to the success of our children and students.

"Students will return to where they learn best, in the classroom with their teachers and peers while following public health measures. I appreciate the input and support of school authorities across the province, as well as our education partners, in developing and refining our school re-entry plan. We are providing clear and detailed guidelines and a re-entry toolkit so everyone can do their part and prepare for a safe return to school."

Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education

Note:

Approximately 48,000 self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, including approximately 7,000 First Nations students living on-reserve learn within the provincial education system. School authorities that have education services agreements with First Nations governments or the Government of Canada are encouraged to reach out early to those First Nations to discuss the re-entry plan, which considers the needs of those First Nations students. Specific supports may vary from region to region and will vary for the unique cultural needs between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. A flexible approach may be needed to accommodate these students depending upon local safety decisions made by First Nations councils. Provincial school authorities should ensure discussions with First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, parents and officials occur early, on all aspects of school re-entry and continue as re-entry progresses.

Key Public Health Messages – Re-Entry

Supporting the return to in-person classes will take the collective support of school boards, school trustees, school administrators, teachers, staff, children, students, parents/guardians along with government and Alberta Health Services (AHS), working together to ensure adherence to the public health measures in place. Parents/guardians play a critical role as they support actions in the home (such as keeping children/students home when sick and accessing testing if symptoms develop) that ultimately keep other children, students and staff safe. Click here for list of COVID-19 symptoms.

Return to in-class learning in school may vary across the province, dependent on the number of COVID-19 cases and the rate of transmission in the local area. If there are areas with high circulation of COVID-19, those areas with minimal cases and lower risk may return sooner than children and students in areas with more COVID-19.

The Alberta government will continue to monitor and share information about COVID-19 cases in Alberta. The Alberta government has developed a COVID-19 status map that shows the level of risk in regions and information about local health measures at COVID-19_Status_Map. It also shows the rate of COVID-19 cases and the number of active cases. Confirmed cases will be monitored in real time to inform proactive responses in localized areas of the province. Municipalities, counties and municipal districts with active cases over 50 per 100,000 population may have additional measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This resource will help inform school re-entry and subsequent school operations.

The return to in-class learning is not without risk of infection transmission. By bringing many people together in a closed setting, such as a school, we expect that cases and even outbreaks of COVID-19 will occur in some locations. Public health officials will be monitoring the situation closely and be ready with a plan that enables a rapid response to cases of COVID-19 in a school. This response plan will include rapid identification of cases through easily accessible and expedient testing, rapid close contact identification, isolation (and testing where applicable). Zone Medical Officers of Health (MOH)/designate will collaborate with school authority/school administration to identify risks and mitigation strategies which may include temporarily suspending in-person class for a group of children/students.

A number of factors will need to be considered when deciding which scenario will be implemented in September 2020. Schools provide more than the opportunity for traditional learning. Schools support the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of Alberta students. All of these factors need to be considered in the context of an evolving pandemic. Not offering in-person schooling has both broad societal implications that need to be considered, and risks to children/students of loss

of educational and social opportunities and supports that must be weighed against the risk of infection transmission.

For both scenario 1 In-school classes resume (near normal with health measures) and scenario 2 In-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures) there will be measures in place to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. These strategies include:

- routine self-screening for all staff and screening of children/students completed by parents/guardians using the Alberta Health Daily Checklist
- enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting recommendations, including daily cleaning for all areas of the school, washrooms and high-touch surface cleaned several times a day and a regularly scheduled deep cleaning when students are not present
- strict stay-at-home policy for any children, students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (even if symptoms resemble a mild cold)
- physical distancing recommendations
- Drop-off/pick-up and children/student transportation procedures that limit contact between households as much as possible
- reorganization of rooms to allow for more physical space
- cohorting of children and students by class where possible
- hand hygiene expectations when entering and exiting the school and classrooms, before and after eating
- continual reminders of the importance of respiratory etiquette (e.g. cover coughs and sneezes, avoid touching the face and disposal of used tissues promptly, followed by hand hygiene)
- Masks may be considered in circumstances where there is prolonged close contact (greater than 15 minutes) and distance of two metres cannot be maintained. (Note that masking is generally not recommended for young children, however if families choose to have their children wear masks, care should be taken that the children not be stigmatized.) Guidelines for the use of non-medical masks can be accessed here.
- Use of shared items or equipment is to be avoided where possible. All students should have their own supplies and be provided with an area for storing personal items. Where sharing of equipment is required, the equipment should be cleaned between uses
- guiding foot traffic flow through entrances and hallways by using markers on the floor or pylons/barriers
- at this time, postponing field trips and activities requiring group transportation
- discouraging large gatherings such as assemblies
- developing procedures to address staff, children or students who develop symptoms while at school, including isolating the symptomatic individual until they are able to leave the school or be picked up.

If there are cases of COVID-19 identified within school settings, the Zone Medical Officer of Health/designate will work directly with the school authority/school administration to collect relevant information required for contact tracing and to provide follow-up recommendations and

messaging for staff, parents/guardians, children and students. It is important for the school to ensure that they collaborate with the Zone Medical Officer of Health/designate to mitigate the risk of additional COVID-19 spread.

- Children and students will be supported by their school authority to learn at home if they are required to isolate due to illness or because they are a close contact of a case of COVID-19.

Planning

It is recognized that there will be some public health measures that are more easily adopted in elementary schools (such as cohorting of children and students by class) than in junior high or high schools. It is important to remember that we are not relying on one single public health measure to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the school setting, instead we are adopting a layered approach that incorporates several different measures and actions. The risk of a COVID-19 outbreak is less likely the more public health measures are implemented and adhered to. Reducing the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in schools will require the dedication and support of school boards, administration, staff, children, students and parents/guardians.

School authorities are expected to continue to work with their suppliers to purchase their regular hygiene and cleaning products.

Summer School in July-August

Local school authorities have decided whether or not to provide summer school programming, primarily to high school students, in response to local needs, while following public health measures in place over the summer.

August 2020 diploma exams will be administered as per the established schedule. Students completing diploma exam courses over the summer are expected to write diploma exams, which will continue to be worth 30 per cent of students' final mark in diploma exam courses, while following public health measures that are in place.

School calendar for the 2020-21 school year

The preferred and likely scenario is that students will return to daily in-school classes at the beginning of the school year. The Alberta government will share its final decision by August 1 on which scenario will be in place at the beginning of the school year. The Alberta government will make the decision to transition between scenarios, if needed, throughout the school year.

Local school authorities continue to have the autonomy and flexibility to determine the calendar for the upcoming school year, including the length of the school day, in order to meet local needs.

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

- Local school authorities can adjust their school calendars and/or the number and length of instructional days, within the parameters of all contractual agreements with school authority employees, to address content in subject areas and review components from the 2019-20 school year.
- School authorities must follow public health measures for children and student learning and extra-curricular activities including physical distancing when possible.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

- Taking into consideration local circumstances, school authorities may divide children and students into two or more groups to go back to in-school classes on an alternating schedule – in which not all students are in classes at school at the same time.
- Local school authorities can adjust their school calendar and/or instructional days, within the parameters of all contractual agreements with school authority employees to address content in subject areas and review components from the 2019-20 school year.
- School authorities must follow public health measures related to the greatest extent possible for children and student learning and extra-curricular activities.
- With physical distancing requirements of two metres, school authorities will need to consider:
    - bus transportation,
    - parent drop off protocols,
    - entry to the school,
    - the start and end times for school days,
    - how classes are scheduled,
    - large gatherings, such as recess and lunch breaks (may need to off-set schedules, limit number of children, students and supervisors),
    - washroom use,
    - movement in hallways,
    - use of auxiliary spaces,
    - the configuration of furniture and equipment to ensure that physical distancing is place,
    - hygiene and cleaning protocols, and
    - protocols for isolating children or students that who become ill at school.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

- All school authorities offer at-home learning opportunities to their children and students.
- Following are the expectations for the education system when operating within scenario 3 for the 2020-21 school year on the number of instructional hours. These instructional hours are minimums and local school authorities have the flexibility to increase hours beyond these minimums.
  Content to be delivered for all grades:
    - ECS – Grade 3
        - focus on language and mathematics learning outcomes that strengthen the development of literacy and numeracy
        - incorporate health curriculum outcomes (with a focus on mental health)
        - average of five hours of work per child or student per week
    - Grades 4-6
        - focus on language and mathematics learning outcomes that strengthen the development of literacy and numeracy
        - incorporate science, social studies and wellness (with a focus on mental health) curriculum outcomes
        - average of six to eight hours of work per student per week
    - Grades 7-9
        - focus on core mathematics, language/literacy, science, social studies and wellness (with a focus on physical and mental health) curriculum outcomes
        - average of 12 to 16 hours of work per student per week
    - Grades 10-12
        - focus on specified and core course requirements for high school graduation, including language (English, Français and French language arts), social studies, mathematics, and science (biology, chemistry, physics and science)
        - average of six hours of work per 5-credit semestered course per week; average of 3 hours of work per 3-credit semestered course per week
- Should scenario 2 or 3 be in place, the ability for the Principal to award up to 15 unassigned credits to students in Grade 12 will be activated.
- Teachers continue to be responsible for assessing the progress of children and students.
- Students continue to be responsible to actively engage in learning and diligently pursue their education.
- School authorities, parents/guardians, children and students must continue to follow public health measures in place.

Supporting Growth in Student Learning

- School authorities can, as deemed appropriate at the local level, reduce time spent teaching non-core subjects to allow for additional instruction time on core (English, Français, French language arts, Math, Social, and Science).
- Administrators, teachers and parents can access the Student Learning Hub for centralized curriculum support.
  - Support materials include FAQs and links to specific resources and materials that will support re-entry.
  - Digital and printable resources to support administrators, teachers, parents and students in a variety of learning settings (e.g. digital, non-digital).
  - Resources that support diverse student learning needs (e.g. English language learners, Francisation).

Grade 12 Diploma Exams

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

A return to in-school classes includes the administration of diploma exams for the 2020-21 school year, which will continue to be mandatory. Results will continue to constitute 30 per cent of a student's final diploma course mark.

- Having normal diploma exam administrations will permit students to access diploma exams to raise their marks.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

A return to in-school classes includes the administration of diploma exams for the 2020-21 school year, which will continue to be mandatory. Results will continue to constitute 30 per cent of a student's final diploma course mark.

- Having normal diploma exam administrations will permit students to access diploma exams to raise their marks.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

Alberta Education will consider the administration of diploma exams, one session at a time. For example, if in-school classes reconvene later than September, January diploma exams will be

cancelled and consideration will be given to re-establishing diploma exams for April, June and August.

- Alberta Education will continue to provide diploma exams to students in extenuating circumstances (i.e. adults and home schooled students).

Diploma exams will be offered in every subject in the November and April exam sessions. Expanding offerings of the diploma exams will support students with some school boards shifting their high school programming to a quarter system as part of their COVID-19 re-entry plan.

In light of the unique circumstances for the upcoming school year, some adjustments in reporting results from provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations is warranted. In 2020-21, Alberta Education will continue to report results from provincial assessments at the school, school authority and provincial levels similar to previous years, where results are available. However, results will not be used to evaluate the system or inform curriculum development given the anomaly the COVID-19 year represents.

Grades 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

PATs continue to be administered. The established PAT schedule provides flexibility for school authorities to administer them within a fixed period of time.

- Participation is optional, with the decision to participate residing at the school authority level. A significant influencing factor for school authority decisions will include the potential for differing regional approaches to physical distancing.
- The administration of PATs is limited to foundational subjects – English Language Arts, Mathematics, and French Language Arts/Français.
- School authorities can decide to excuse some or all students from PATs if their learning has fallen behind.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

PATs continue to be administered. The established PAT schedule provides flexibility for school authorities to administer them within a fixed period of time.

- Participation is optional, with the decision to participate residing at the school authority level. A significant influencing factor for school authority decisions will include the potential for differing regional approaches to physical distancing.
- The administration of PATs is limited to foundational subjects – English Language Arts, Mathematics, and French Language Arts/Français.

- School authorities can decide to excuse some or all students from PATs if their learning has fallen behind.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

- Alberta Education will cancel the January administration of 2020-21 PATs, and decide on the administration of May/June PATs based on the duration of the cancellation of in-school classes. The same principles from scenarios 1 and 2 would apply.

In light of the unique circumstances for the upcoming school year, some adjustments in reporting results from provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations is warranted. In 2020-21, Alberta Education will continue to report results from provincial assessments at the school, school authority and provincial levels similar to previous years, where results are available. However, evaluations of results in relation to previous performance or statistical comparison to the provincial results will not be reported.

Grade 3 Student Learning Assessments (SLAs)

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

Like the 2019-20 school year, school authorities have flexibility to administer SLAs. School authorities can also choose if all or some of their schools or classes within a school will participate, and to what degree participation takes place.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

School authorities have flexibility to administer SLAs. School authorities can also choose if all, or some of their schools will participate, and to what degree participation takes place.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

Alberta Education will cancel the administration of 2020-21 SLAs.

Children and Students Who Require Specialized Supports and Services

School authorities must consider and enable the full participation and inclusion of students with disabilities. In circumstances in which students who require specialized supports and services are not able to follow guidelines and require support and adaptation to public health measures, plans must be developed to ensure their inclusion.

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

- School authorities should determine and review components from the 2019-20 school year for children and students who require specialized supports and services (i.e. behavioural, intellectual, learning, communication or physical characteristics, or a combination of any of them).
- Mental health supports for children, students and staff should be in place, as per the re-entry plan section on mental health.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

- School authorities are expected to have in place the same supports and services as noted in scenario 1.
- School authorities have the flexibility to make decisions on staffing, including the hiring of educational assistants and other staff who support children and students who require specialized supports and services, based on the their needs.
- For those children and students who continue learning at home, school authorities are expected to have in place the same supports and services as noted in scenario 3.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

- School authorities continue to offer at-home learning for all their children in an Early Childhood Services program and students in Grades 1 through 12, including those who require specialized supports and services.
- Teachers and other staff (e.g., speech language pathologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, mental health workers, family school liaison workers, teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired etc.) will provide specialized supports and services to children and students, including those with disabilities in consultation with families in order to

support learning outcomes at home, while avoiding direct contact to protect children, students and staff health.

- Teachers will be responsible to ensure that individual support plans/individual program plans (ISPs/IPPs) are implemented, monitored and evaluated for children and students who may be in need of specialized supports and services, as per the Standards for Special Education.
- Teachers will consult with parents through their chosen communication methods, such as email, phone and/or other digital modes, to develop ISP/IPPs for the 2020-21 school year.
- ISPs/IPPs will be reviewed regularly by teachers with parents and when appropriate, with the student, to update information, review effectiveness of identified supports, strategies and services and revise plans and/or identify new supports and/or strategies and/or services that will be provided.
- Teachers are responsible for assessing and reporting on a child's/student's progress. Each school authority will have to determine what will work best for their children and students. This will likely vary among the school authorities, and may even vary from school to school.
- School authorities have the flexibility to identify educational assistants that are needed to support an educational program for a particular child or student, and to decide if a particular educational assistant is needed to deliver a particular education program, while the student is learning at home.
- Continued mental health supports for children, students and staff are in place, as per the section on mental health in this re-entry plan.

Extra-Curricular Activities

As per the *Guide to Education*, extra-curricular activities complement and are not part of instructional time where there is student-teacher interaction and supervision.

School authorities continue to have the flexibility to offer extra-curricular activities to students. Alberta Education is working with Alberta Health and education partners, including the Alberta School Athletics Association, to explore go forward possibilities for athletic activities and events within the context of health measures being in place.

School authorities, parents/guardians, students and community members must continue to follow public health measures in place.

Masks, Hygiene and Health Requirements

Within the context of ECS-12 education, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is primarily focused on non-medical masks. Practices such a physical distancing, cohorting, hand washing, staying home when sick, and increased environmental cleaning continue to be priority public health measures. The use of masks are not generally recommended for children, however if families choose to have their children wear masks, care should be taken that the children not be stigmatized.

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

If there are cases of COVID-19 identified within school settings, the Zone Medical Officer of Health will work directly with the school authority to provide follow-up recommendations and messaging for staff, parents/guardians, children and students. It is important for the school authority/school administration to ensure that they collaborate with the Zone Medical Officer.

Children and students will be supported by their school authority to learn at home if they are required to self-isolate.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

If there are cases of COVID-19 identified within school settings, the Zone Medical Officer of Health will work directly with the school authority to provide follow-up recommendations and messaging for staff, parents/guardians, children and students. It is important for the school to ensure that they collaborate with the Zone Medical Officer.

Children and students will be supported by their school authority to learn at home if they are required to isolate due to illness or because they are a close contact of a case of COVID-19.

A resource to provide guidance to school authorities, schools, staff, children, students and parents/guardians is under development. Guidelines and standards on the use of non-medical face masks is accessible at the following webpage:

- https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx

  Note: Alberta Education is collaborating with Alberta Health to provide additional guidance for school authorities on the use of masks in the school setting.

Mental Health/Psychosocial Supports for Students and Staff

The Government of Alberta has put in place mental health supports in recognition of the unprecedented efforts already in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Mental Health and Addiction COVID-19 Community Funding Grant
  - Mental Health and Addiction COVID-19 Community Funding Grant

        - School authorities are encouraged to work with those organizations that received funding to provide additional mental health supports within their school communities.
        - Further information will be provided as decisions are made in terms of the distribution of the additional funding.
- Mental Health Helpline: Phone: 1-877-303-2642
    - This toll-free helpline provides confidential and anonymous services, crisis intervention, information about mental health services and referrals to other agencies.
- French Mental Health Help Line: 1-800-567-9699
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
    - kidshelpphone.ca
    - Text CONNECT to 686868
- French Kids Help:
    - www.jeunessejecoute.ca
- Health Link – phone 811
- Alberta Health Services
    - Help in Tough Times
    - Healthy Together
- The federal First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; online chat at Hope for Wellness.
- Métis Nation of Alberta COVID-19 Mental Health Information
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Trauma-informed practice
- Working Together to Support Mental Health in Alberta Schools
    - Travailler ensemble pour soutenir la santémentale dans les écoles de l'Alberta
- Heart of Recovery
    - Le coeur du rétablissement
- Alberta Health Services - Information for Teachers
- Alberta Community and Social Services - Children's Mental Health
- MORE (Mental Health Online Resources for Educators)

Other resources that may be helpful include:

- Alberta Family Wellness - Brain Story Certification
- Kids Have Stress Too
- The Incredible Years
- mental health literacy (for kids)
- Cognitive Behavioural Intervention for Trauma in Schools

Alberta Education has also incorporated wellness outcomes for Kindergarten to Grade 9 curriculum with a focus on physical and mental health. High school students continue to be required to take physical education and CALM (which includes information about mental health) as part of their graduation requirements.

Alberta Education's new Specialized Learning Support (SLS) Grant provides funding for school authorities to provide a continuum of supports and services to children and students in an inclusive learning environment. School authorities are responsible for ensuring their SLS funding is disbursed based on the needs of children and student related to supports required for learning.

SLS funding is comprised of three allocations; one of which is a Student Wellness Program Allocation.

The Student Wellness Program Allocation recognizes children and student wellness can affect classroom learning and social interactions, both of which are essential to the success of children and students. Funding is provided to create capacity in school authorities to offer children and student wellness programs, which help to improve educational outcomes of all schools. These could include:

- Counselling supports
- Psychological supports
- Social-emotional supports
- Family-school liaison
- Community liaison
- Mental health workers
- Addiction supports
- Behavioural consultants

Alberta Education has made safe and respectful schools a priority by offering *Respect in Schools* online free of charge. The program is designed to provide school employees with the tools they need to foster a safe and respectful learning environment so they can support all those involved with schooling (e.g., teachers, administrators, support staff and volunteers). Prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year, it is strongly encouraged that all employees complete the online training.

Transportation

Children and students across the province travel to and from school through a combination of walking, being driven by their parents/guardians, public transportation and school bus services provided by school authorities. Travel/transportation of children and students must follow public health measures in place. Detailed planning is underway and more information will follow.

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

School authorities determine transportation service levels, ensuring that all children and students legally entitled to transportation are transported in accordance with the resumption plan for the school authority. A full complement of drivers will likely be required for school authorities that are resuming classes. School authorities should adjust routing accordingly. School authorities should discuss transportation plans early in cases of Education Services Agreements with First Nations.

School authorities must also consider additional safety measures to minimize the risk of exposure to the driver, children and students. Considerations include that a protective physical divider may be considered for the driver; fixed seating plans should be implemented to assist contact tracing, students from the same family should sit together, and, when possible maintain physical distancing between students; and additional resources and supplies will be required to sanitize the bus after every route.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

School authorities determine transportation service levels, ensuring that all children and students legally entitled to transportation are transported in accordance with the resumption plan for the school authority. A full complement of drivers will likely be required for school authorities that are resuming classes, even if children or students are attending on a modified schedule (alternate days). School authorities should adjust routing accordingly. Boards should discuss transportation plans early in cases of Education Services Agreements with First Nations.

School authorities must also consider additional safety measures to minimize the risk of exposure to the driver, children and students. Considerations include that a protective physical divider may be considered for the driver; seating plans must be implemented to assist contact tracing, students from the same family should sit together and maintain physical distancing between children and students; and additional resources and supplies will be required to sanitize the bus after every route.

Alberta Education is collaborating with Alberta Transportation and Alberta Health to ensure challenges raised by school authorities are considered.

Evaluations for Teacher Permanent Professional Certification (PPC)

Scenario 1: in-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)

Alberta Education will work with school authorities to resume evaluations as soon as possible.

Alberta Education will extend Interim Professional Certificates (IPC) for teachers who have completed 400 days of teaching, but have not completed two successful evaluations. Teachers will be evaluated in the future in order to attain their PPC.

Alberta Education will also waive fees for IPC extensions for those teachers impacted by the interruption to their evaluations.

Scenario 2: in-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)

Alberta Education will work with school authorities to resume evaluations as soon as possible.

Alberta Education will extend IPCs for teachers who have completed 400 days of teaching, but have not completed two successful evaluations. Teachers will be evaluated in the future in order to attain their PPC.

Alberta Education will also waive fees for IPC extensions for those teachers impacted by the interruption to their evaluations.

Scenario 3: at-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

As a result of in-school classes being cancelled, evaluations for PPC may be delayed and require an extension to a teacher's IPC.

Alberta Education will extend IPCs for teachers who have completed 400 days of teaching, but have not completed two successful evaluations. Teachers will be evaluated in the future in order to attain their PPC.

Alberta Education will also waive fees for IPC extensions for those teachers impacted by the interruption to their evaluations.

Teacher Preparation Program Student Practicums

Alberta Education recognizes that some student teachers were impacted by the suspension of in-school classes and were not able to complete the required 10 weeks of supervised student teaching. Student teachers who are in their final year of their teacher preparation program were particularly impacted.

New graduates generally receive an Interim Professional Certificate (IPC) as they begin their careers, eventually progressing to a Permanent Professional Certificate (PPC). To receive an IPC, the Alberta university graduate must meet minimum requirements.

If in-school classes do not resume in September, and this continues to be the case well into the rest of the school year, there will be no opportunities for face-to-face placements of student practicums. Without completion of student practicums, B.Ed. students will be unable to complete their programs.

On a case-by-case basis, the Alberta Registrar will consider exceptions to the 10-week practicum experience and may issue an IPC with conditions.

Internet/SuperNet Connectivity for First Nations and Rural/Remote Communities

Alberta Education is aware of the challenges in accessing internet/SuperNet in some First Nations, Metis Settlements and rural remote communities.

While children or students without access to high-speed internet, and therefore online learning, were able to continue their studies through alternative means (e.g. hard-copy course packages and communicate by phone), the Alberta government is working with various partners, such as telecommunication and internet service providers, as well as the Government of Canada, on planning to further support affordable connectivity across the province. School authorities should continue to work with First Nations and Metis Settlements and rural/remote communities to deliver remote learning options.

Special considerations will continue to be given to strategies for maintaining children and student learning in communities that do not use learning technology (e.g. Hutterite and Old Colony Mennonite Low German speaking communities).

Recognizing the start of the 2020-21 school year

Local school authorities have the autonomy and flexibility to determine the format and timing of beginning of school year celebrations. In alignment with Alberta's relaunch strategy and the school re-entry plan, Alberta Education will consult with school authorities and education partners to determine appropriate celebrations of the beginning of the school year.

Celebrations must follow the public health measures in place at the time of the events.