

POLICY FLA – School Operations and Learning Continuity During Emergencies

Operating an effective and efficient school system requires the Board to make decisions regarding the day-to-day use of its facilities.

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and a transparent process for temporary closure of class(es), grades, or entire school(s), or requests for exemption from in-person learning, in the event of an emergency.

DEFINITIONS

“At-home Learning” means teacher-directed education programming provided by a board to a student on a temporary basis at the student’s residence where supervision of learning is temporarily provided using a digital platform such as Google Classroom or Schoology.

“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, specifically the use of face masks or other face coverings for the primary purpose of preventing or limiting the spread of any communicable disease as defined in the *Public Health Act*.

GUIDELINES

1. In-person learning is the priority and must be maintained whenever possible.
2. When exceptional circumstances are present that threaten the safe operation of all or part of the building where students regularly attend school, such as:
 - a) Staff shortages that create unsafe or unsupervised conditions; or
 - b) Structural damages or loss of utilities that compromise safety; or
 - c) Emergent orders (e.g. fire, flood, environmental hazard); or
 - d) Any other emergency that renders the building unsafe. The safety of students and staff is a primary consideration. The Superintendent has the authority to restrict access to all or part of the building where it is no longer feasible to conduct in-person learning so long as the Board is satisfied that conditions are such that threaten the safe operation of all or part of the building.
3. In consideration of subsection (2), the Superintendent has the authority to provide At-home Learning without also providing an in-person learning option for some or all students if:
 - a) An alternate in-person location is first considered and no suitable location can be found.
 - b) The At-home Learning plan is for 3 consecutive days or less.
 - c) The Superintendent notifies the Minister within 48 hours.

- d) For any shift to an At-home Learning plan greater than 3 consecutive days, the Superintendent will contact their Alberta Education and Childcare field services manager or consultant to discuss the issue and potential request for further exemption.

PROCEDURES

1. The Superintendent will provide approval to a school Principal to a school to move a group, class, or grade of students to a temporary At-home Learning plan.
2. The Superintendent shall 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. The Principal shall ensure communication with the affected parent(s)/guardian(s)/independent students about the structure of At-home Learning, including but not limited to:
 - a) Online learning platform being used - (e.g. Google Classroom, Schoology);
 - b) Daily schedule for classes;
 - c) Expectations for attendance; and
 - d) Any provisions for provincial assessments, if necessary.
4. The Principal shall ensure communication with the affected parent(s)/guardian(s)/and/or students about the supports that are available, including but not limited to:
 - a) Technology supports;
 - b) IPP supports;
 - c) English as an Additional Language supports;
 - d) Supports for students with complex needs.
5. The Principal shall ensure that the affected parent(s)/guardians(s) and/or students are encouraged to contact the school if they require support during the temporary shift to At-home Learning.
6. Should a Non-Routine Individual Health Measure be required or recommended by the public health authority, PWPSD 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 health measure.

REFERENCES

Cross References:

[Policy FL](#) – Closure of School or Grade Reduction

[Policy FL Exhibit 1](#) – PWPSD Provision of Information for School Closure or Grade Reduction

Legal Reference:

[Education Act](#), Section 62
[In-Person Learning Regulation](#)
[Public Health Act](#)

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Next Review: 2027/2028