

## **Barb Tymchak Olafson**

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**From:** EDC Minister <Education.Minister@gov.ab.ca>  
**Sent:** March 15, 2020 5:01 PM  
**Subject:** COVID-19 Update regarding schools

**To:** **Board Chairs and Superintendents of Public, Separate, Francophone and Charter School Authorities**  
**First Nations Education Directors**  
**Private School Authorities**  
**Early Childhood Services**  
**Presidents and Executive Directors of Stakeholder Associations**  
Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA)  
Alberta Educational Facilities Administrators Association (AEFAA)  
Alberta Home Education Association (AHEA)  
Alberta Homeschooling Association (AHA)  
Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)  
Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)  
Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)  
Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA)  
Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta (AISCA)  
Association of School Business Officials of Alberta (ASBOA)  
College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS)  
Council of Catholic Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA)  
Fédération des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta (FCSFA)  
Fédération des parents francophones de l'Alberta (FPFA)  
Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA)  
The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS)

I want to thank the many boards and education partners that have provided their views over the weekend. It has become clear that it would be challenging to implement health recommendations like social distancing and proper cleaning protocols.

The safety of our students, teachers and staff is the number one priority for all of us – for me and my Cabinet colleagues, for Dr. Hinshaw and for school staff.

With that in mind, we will be indefinitely cancelling classes across the province. Students are expected to stay home.

We are all in this together. And I hope you all agree this is the right decision.

School authorities are expected to continue their regular day-to-day operations and ensure the safety of our school facilities. We expect maintenance, capital projects, cleaning of facilities, and administrative work to continue.

Now I know that student progression will be on the minds of both parents and students. We expect every student to receive a final mark and that students will progress to their next grade level next year. However, provincial assessments, such as provincial achievement tests will be cancelled as of this time. Diploma exams essential for post-secondary acceptance will continue.

We are confident that every student who is eligible to graduate from Grade 12 this year will graduate.

The Government will also be working with post-secondary institutions to ensure that these extraordinary circumstances do not prevent our students from being eligible for admission to post-secondary studies for the upcoming school year.

Teachers and other school staff will still be expected to work, either from home or at their workplace, to ensure these expectations are met and to support student learning.

Decisions on how to do this are still to be made, and it may vary depending on the school jurisdiction. Given the unique situation, my department and I will work with school divisions throughout this process, and school authorities will still receive their full allotment of funding for the 2019-20 school year.

I know these are challenging times for everyone. I will be sending an open letter to parents in the coming days, and Alberta Education will be working directly with you to help navigate through these changes.

We all have a role to play to keep our students and the staff that work in our schools safe and healthy. This is – and will always be – our top priority. The most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 situation in Alberta can be found on [alberta.ca](http://alberta.ca).

I know this leaves you with many questions. Please stay tuned in the days to come for more details.

Sincerely,

Adriana LaGrange  
Minister of Education

cc: Secretary-Treasurers of Public, Separate, Francophone and Charter School Jurisdictions  
Communications Contacts at School Divisions

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