

March 30, 2020

We are all finding our way in this new education system and there are many questions that come along with that. Here are some of the answers we think may be helpful. What's most important? The health and wellbeing of you and your family.

GENERAL

1. I work outside the home and am not able to be at home with my child/children during the day. Realistically, what is the amount of time my child needs to be doing school work?

Anything helps. Alberta Education has set out the following guidelines for the amount of work teachers should provide. We will also be providing additional materials to help your children fill the rest of the day if you'd like to.

- Elementary (K-6) about 5 hours assigned work per week
- Middle/Jr. High (grade 7-9) about 10 hours assigned work per week
- High School (10-12) about 3 hours for 5 credit course

2. We have a lot going on in our family and I feel a lot of pressure about taking on teaching my children at home. How am I supposed to manage this?

You and your family's health and well being is the most important thing and we understand there are all kinds of challenges facing us in this exceptional time. Your school and the staff have many ways they can help, so don't hesitate to call the school and ask questions. Alberta's government does wish for every student to continue learning for the rest of the school year and students have a duty to both complete the work their teachers assign and follow the direction parents give. Just do the best you can for the situation you're in. That may look different from family to family.

3. Will my child be tested on the work that is sent home from their teacher(s) and if so, how will this be done?

The focus will be on learning, not assessment or testing. The priority is to provide parents with academic work and ensure learning continues to the greatest degree possible, not create a flood of papers going back and forth between home and school. We want students to be as ready as possible for the next grade or course which will follow. Teachers will be in contact with the home to check in regularly and find out how students are doing with the work assigned.

4. I appreciate the time being spent with online learning and videos, but would it be possible to have worksheets and other materials sent home or picked up? (Example: Worksheets for my children with the answer sheet for the parent.)

Please contact your child's teacher regarding this matter. Schools can provide print materials for families. The focus will be on interesting activities that help students learn the key concepts which still need to be taught this school year. Some concepts are better taught by doing activities rather than just on worksheets, but students are not required to work online if they don't have the tools like the internet or a device to work on.

For older students, they are probably more used to using technology for learning so it is easier to convert to using technology at home.

5. Many of the concepts being taught are different from when I was in school. How am I able to teach my child when I am unfamiliar with the subject?

You're not alone and it goes to show how important it is to teach students things they can remember through to their adult life. Teachers will be designing lessons which transfer to learning at home and in many cases can share links to videos or other tools for learning. Check out our Horizon website where we've added general learning tools under the "At Home Learning" tab: <https://www.horizon.ab.ca/>. School websites will have resources, too.

6. Since my child will possibly miss several months of school, how will this affect their grade placement for the upcoming school year?

All students who were on track to progress to the next grade will progress. In cases where students were struggling, teachers are here to help them improve. Every student will receive final grades and will receive a report card, appropriate to their grade level. The world will have to adjust to this new reality in many ways, from university admittance and scholarships to the levels of readiness students will have when they return to school. We will take care of students, meeting them where they're at academically when they return to school.

7. My child is having a difficult time and I wish they could talk to someone. Where can I go for help?

Our Family School Liaison Counsellors are here for you. They will do all they can to be a listening ear and help prevent you and your family from becoming overwhelmed. Please call the school to connect.

8. What technology platform does Horizon School Division use?

We use Google, or GSuite for Education as it's called for schools. Student email addresses which end with @hsd67.ca or staff accounts ending in @horizon.ab.ca are Google accounts and enable them to work in a controlled environment where their work will not be shared publicly.

To find out what specific tools your children's teachers are using, check the school website. Older students will most commonly work in Google Classroom, but teachers select the tools which best suit the skills and technology available to their students.

ELEMENTARY

9. I am at home with my child during the day and am not sure how to schedule their learning. Do you have any suggestions?

It's a great idea to establish a school day routine by setting up a schedule with your child/children. Changing activities every half hour or so helps with focus and makes the time pass more quickly. Schools will commonly share suggestions as well.

Here's a sample of how you might set up an elementary child's day. It can also be as simple as setting a morning time for learning.

Between 8:00-9:00	Wake up, Brush Teeth, Get dressed, Eat Breakfast, Clean up Dishes and Breakfast		
9:00-9:30	Reading/Audio books	Read with Siblings or Parent or Read to Self	
9:30-10:00	Math	Assigned math work or math games (dice, sudoku, math facts practice)	
10:00-10:30	Outside activity This is Gym Class!	Walk, Scavenger Hunt, Games, Yard Work, Ride Bike	
10:30-11:00	Wash Hands Academic Time	Assigned work from teacher(s) in Language Arts	
11:00-11:30	Creative time (No screen time)	Lego, games, puzzles, playdough, journaling, story writing, crafts	
11:30-12:00	Wash hands Help make lunch	Clean off the table Set the table Wash Hands	
12:00-12:30	Eat Lunch	Clean up and wash dishes	
12:30-1:00	Quiet Time (No screen time)	Wash Hands Read, play a game, mindfulness activities	
1:00-1:30	Academic Time	Assigned work from teacher(s)	
1:30-2:00	Outside activity This is Gym Class!	Same as in the morning. Follow a YouTube exercise video if the weather is poor	
2:00-2:30	Wash Hands Academic Time	Assigned work from teacher(s)	
2:30-3:00	Project Time	Learn about something in the world that interests you	
3:00-3:30	Choose your Activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journaling Listen to Music Just Dance Reading Doodling Games Gardening Raking Play outside Make a fort outside Write a letter Write your teacher a note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baking Sewing Exercise Coloring Play an instrument Woodwork Call Grandparents Do an online field trip Create a game or obstacle course Draw Build a model

10. My high school student has good marks in their classes right now. If they're going to pass anyway, do they really need to do anymore?

Yes, they do. The government expects that every student, regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic status, will continue to learn while in-school classes across the province are cancelled. A healthy, capable high school student with supports at home is expected to continue their studies. Failing to do so when they're able may result in a lower grade than their current standing.

11. Does my Grade 12 student need to complete courses if there are no scheduled diploma exams?

Yes. In order to progress, it is important that students cover as much course content as possible. Students who are healthy and able are expected to stay on schedule to learn the course material they will receive credit in.

If the student is unable to complete a course that would have led them to achieve a high school diploma, such as work experience or a career and technology studies (CTS) course, principals have the authority to award credits to ensure the student graduates.

12. What happens if my high school student runs into problems like having to work long hours, becoming ill, or not having the internet to complete work online?

Please remember your teachers are here to help you. It is important to contact your teacher or call the school if a student is not able to continue with learning for reasons beyond your control.