



Alberta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
Office of Education
(ACOE)

2021/2022 Re-Entry Guide
Alberta Education Scenario 1 - In-School Learning

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Introduction

On June 30, 2021, the government announced that we will plan “on a normal return to school, with in-class learning for the majority of students, in fall 2021. The plan outlines key elements for the resumption of learning.” This means all Alberta Conference schools will be open for in-person classes.

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

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

Implementation of the 2021–2022 School Year Plan is subject to change with direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Alberta Education will continue to engage with our education partners as part of this important process.

There are two scenarios in the plan.

Scenario 1: In-School classes resume (near normal with health measures outlined by Alberta Education)

Scenario 2: At-home learning (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

While the ACOE will begin the year in Scenario 1 (near normal), it is possible that we may have to transition between scenarios during the school year. Health officials will work with school authorities to make the decision if we need to transition to at-home learning based on multiple factors including the number of COVID-19 cases in a zone or a school and the risk of ongoing transmission.

Any changes in the school re-entry scenario will be determined by Alberta Health and Alberta Education with information on local school-based and zone information. We will remain in communication with the Alberta government and will continue to follow its advice.

The Alberta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Office of Education’s (ACOE) 2021-22 re-entry plan is subject to change as more information becomes available from the province. We will continue to update this plan with more details as needed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Health Measures

Hand Hygiene

Handwashing is the best practice when facilities are available. Washing with soap and water for 20 seconds is the preferred method for cleaning hands. If unavailable, hand sanitizer, containing at least 60% alcohol will be provided.

- All people entering and exiting the building are required to use hand hygiene.
- Proper hand washing reminders will be placed at all hand washing and sanitizing stations.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided and utilized in entrances, exits, classroom entrances, near high-touch equipment such as microwave ovens and vending machines, and in other high traffic areas.
- Handwashing should be done:
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
 - Before leaving home, on arrival at school and before leaving school.
 - Before and after breaks and sporting activities.
 - Before and after eating any food, including snacks.
 - Before touching the face (nose, eyes, or mouth).
 - After using the toilet.
 - Before and after any transitions within the school setting (e.g. to another classroom, indoor-outdoor transitions, etc.)
 - After sneezing or coughing.
 - Before and after administering medications.
 - Before and after food preparation, handling or serving.
 - Before and after assisting students with eating.
 - Before and after cleaning tasks.
 - After contact with body fluids (e.g. runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
 - When donning and doffing masks and gloves.
 - After handling garbage.

Daily Screening

Before leaving home, staff (including substitute teachers), children/students, visitors, and volunteers who will access the school for work or education, should self-screen for symptoms each day that they enter the school using the applicable checklist for their age group ([Child Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#) or [Adult Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#)).

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- Parents and children/students should be provided a copy of the screening tool upon school registration.
- Schools should have copies of the daily checklists available for visitors to the school.
- Although health screening of staff, students and visitors is required, there is no requirement for verification or the collection and retention of formal records.
- Schools should keep records of children's known pre-existing conditions. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies), the child should be tested at least once for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to school. This will be considered the student's baseline health. Written confirmation by a physician that a student or staff member's symptoms are due to a chronic illness is not necessary. Repeat testing is not indicated unless the nature of the symptom changes (e.g., a chronic cough worsens).
- Anyone that reports symptoms must be directed to stay home, seek health care advice as appropriate (e.g., call Health Link 811, or their primary health care practitioner, or 911 for emergency response), and fill out the [AHS Online Self-Assessment tool](#) to determine if they should be tested.
- [Signs](#) should be posted reminding persons not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

Illness at School

- Teachers and staff exhibiting signs of illness will remove themselves from contact with others when safe to do so and go home.
- Students exhibiting signs of illness will be moved to a supervised, designated infirmary room or area in the school.
- The area/room will have an "Infirmary, Do Not Enter" sign that will be posted when the room is in use.
- The room should have the ability to house more than one student at a time while maintaining physical distancing.
- Teachers and or staff attending to the child exhibiting signs of illness will, in addition to the use of masks, wear a face shield while in close proximity.
- After the room is used, a sign will be posted indicating the room must be cleaned. Custodial staff will then provide enhanced cleaning.
- Parents/caregivers will be notified and advised to pick up their child immediately, within one hour.
- All items touched/used by the person exhibiting signs of illness will be cleaned and disinfected after they have left the school.

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

- Individuals with a confirmed case of Covid-19 should isolate for a minimum 10 days or until symptoms have improved AND no fever for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.
- If a COVID-19 case is identified in the school population, Alberta Health Services Public Health may determine if the case was at school while infectious or acquired infection at school. If so, AHS will notify the superintendent who will assist in contacting the school administration to provide follow-up recommendations and messaging for staff, parents/guardians, and students.
- The decision to send a cohort/class home or to close a school will be made in conjunction with the ACOE and by the local medical officer of health. If students are required to self-isolate, the school will support students to learn or work at home.

Masks

- Mask use will be required on Buses for all students, staff, and drivers until the province removes the order for their use on Public Transit.
- Masking will be mandatory for students in grades 4-12 and staff and teachers in all grades.
- Wearing a homemade or non-medical mask in public is a tool to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. It hasn't been proven that masks protect the person wearing it, but it can help protect people from being exposed to your germs.
- School staff should monitor for and address any discrimination or bullying associated with a student either wearing or not wearing a mask.

Alberta guidance on mask use is available [here](#).

Physical Set-up of Schools

Physical Distancing

Schools should consider controls to promote spacing as much as possible between all students/staff in areas inside and outside of the classroom, including hallways, washrooms, and common areas. This may include:

- Staggering start and end times for classes to avoid crowded entrances or exits and hallways.
- Considering limiting bathroom occupancy.
- Schools may stagger lunch/snack breaks/recess to maintain physical distancing among students.
- Schools may utilize outdoor learning spaces more frequently.
- Consider holding Assemblies and other school-wide events virtually or outside to avoid large gatherings of people in one space.
- Designate entrances for classes/groups of students.
- Spacing markers in crowded areas.
- Stagger drop off/bus arrival times, coordinated with entry/exit.
- Encourage parents/guardians to remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.

Classroom Set-up

- Classrooms should be decluttered of non-essential items to allow for efficient cleaning.
- Teachers and students should not share personal items (e.g. electronic devices, writing instruments, school supplies, etc.).
- Workspaces and desks should be separated from each other by 2 metres where and when possible. If 2 metres cannot be arranged between desks/tables, students should be arranged so they are not facing each other (e.g. arranged in rows rather than in small groups or a semi-circle).
- Desks should be set up around the perimeter of the room leaving the central area open for adequate distancing during entry/exit of the classroom.
- Ventilation may be increased, and windows opened where appropriate.

Movement in Building

- Signs and directional arrows on walls and/or floors will guide movement in common areas and hallways. This may include one-way hallways and designated entrance and exit doors.
- Consider designating entrances for classes/groups of students.
- Stagger drop off/bus arrival times, coordinated with entry/exit.

- Encourage parents/guardians to remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.

Cohorts or Groups of Students

As the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is reduced by limiting exposure to others, cohorts are recommended where possible. A cohort is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together. The size of the cohort will depend on the physical space of the classroom or learning setting.

- All elementary schools (K-6) will implement class cohorting.
- It is encouraged that cohorting be maintained as much as possible in grades 7-12. Where possible Grades 7-12, will organize students into groups (cohorts) that stay together throughout the day.
- As much as possible, the school will minimize the number of adults that interact with groups of students throughout the day.

Cleaning of Schools

Cleaning Schedules

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces.

- There should be an increase in frequency of cleaning (removing visible dirt) and disinfection (killing germs) of high-touch areas and equipment (e.g., desks, doorknobs, handrails, microwave ovens, vending machines, etc.) inside and outside classrooms.
- Common area surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day.
- Student contact surfaces (e.g., desks and equipment) should be cleaned and disinfected between each student/user. Limit the sharing of supplies as much as possible.
- Students should be provided with an area to store personal items. Individual assigned lockers may be used.
- Disinfectants used must have a Drug Information Number (DIN) and a broad-spectrum virucidal claim OR a virucidal claim against non-enveloped viruses or coronaviruses. Alternatively, 1000 ppm bleach solution can be used.
- Follow the instructions on the product label to disinfect effectively.
- Desks and tables that are used during lunchtime will be sanitized before and after each use.

Shared Equipment

- Phones, Chromebooks, computers, and other frequently touched electronics like tablets, remotes including keyboards, mice, earbuds, and other devices must be cleaned and disinfected regularly by the user, using supplied disinfectant wipes before and after each use.
- Use of shared items or sports equipment is discouraged. Equipment that is shared must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use, and users must perform hand hygiene before and after each use.

Water Fountains

- It is highly recommended that parents send their child to school with their own personal water bottle that can be refilled. However, as per ministry recommendations, water fountains can remain open as mouthpieces of drinking fountains are not a major source of virus transmission and require regular cleaning according to manufacturer recommendations.

Daily Operation of Schools

Pick-up and Drop-off

- Parents/Guardians and caregivers are encouraged to remain outside the school to pick-up and drop off their children.
- Schools will determine student entry and exit points and if the drop-off and pick-up schedule needs to be staggered based on factors such as transportation arrivals.
- Physical distancing is encouraged to be maintained.

Lunch and Recess Breaks

- Physical distancing protocols should be observed during staggered entry and exit, as well as transitioning between classes, lunch, and recess to further mitigate congestion.
- Seating plans should be established, and students should practice physical distancing while eating.
- Desks and tables that are used during lunchtime will be sanitized before and after each use.

Playgrounds

- Playgrounds can remain Open.

Food & Nutrition Services

- Classes that teach food preparation may occur. Students should follow general precautions, such as ensuring hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, wearing masks, and avoiding handling common or shared serving utensils or cookware.
 - Any food prepared during a class that teaches food preparation should be served by a designated person.
- Parents/teachers can provide food/treats for a classroom if there is a designated person serving the food and appropriate hand hygiene is followed before and after eating. Please follow the school's policy for parent-provided food.
- Parents/guardians should be asked to have student food provided in clean containers with their own utensils.

- Students must not share utensils, dishes, or water bottles and drink containers.
- For cafeterias:
 - Use alternate processes to reduce the numbers of people dining together at one time.
 - If a school is using a common lunchroom and staggering lunch times, ensure that all surfaces of the tables and chairs (including the underneath edge of the chair seat) are cleaned and disinfected after each use.
 - Adapt other areas to serve as additional dining space to increase spacing among persons in the same room.
 - Dispense cutlery, napkins, and other items to students/children, rather than allowing them to pick up their own items.
- Students should practice physical distancing while eating.
- If vending machines remain operational, hand sanitizer must be available near them.

Programs and Classes

- Students can participate in group performance activities (i.e., singing, dancing, playing instruments, theatre).
 - Indoor activities are permitted, with requirements for two-meter physical distancing and masking where possible, and symptom screening for participants.
 - People doing certain performance activities (e.g., singing) are more likely to breathe heavily and produce more respiratory particles. To mitigate this increased risk, some considerations could include:
 - Reducing the size of groups that participate in these activities.
 - Assigning staff and volunteers to one group only for the duration of the activity.
 - Limiting the number of activities in which each student participates
 - Increasing the distance between participants
 - Moving these activities outside wherever possible.
- Access to science classrooms / industrial arts for instruction is permitted.
- Students are permitted to participate in group physical activity. Participants should continue to follow the school guidance regarding hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- People doing intense physical activity are more likely to breathe heavily and produce more respiratory particles. To mitigate this increased risk, some special considerations include:
 - Reducing the size of groups that participate in these activities.
 - Assigning staff and volunteers to one group only for the duration of the activity.
 - Limiting the number of activities in which each student participates
 - Moving these activities outside wherever possible.

- When possible, sports cohorts/teams should be maintained during transportation to and from any external site. Combining cohorts for the purpose of transportation is not recommended (e.g., avoid having two teams or two classes share the same bus).
- Youth aged 18 and under are not required to mask or maintain physical distancing during physical activity, such as a team sport.
- There are no restrictions on outdoor activities.
- Spectator attendance is limited to one-third fire code capacity at all indoor physical activities. Attendees must be masked and ensure physical distancing between different households or an individual who lives alone and their two close contacts.

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Can continue with health measures in place.
- Sports practices, competitions and outdoor activities may proceed.

Field Trips

- Off-site activities (e.g., field trips for group physical activity, performance activities and recreational activities that are part of the curriculum) are permitted:
- Hold activities outdoors as much as possible.
- Schools should develop procedures to address students or staff developing symptoms during the field trip; plans should include a designated area to isolate the ill individual, what extra supplies may be needed (e.g., mask for the child, mask/face shield for the individual attending to the child, etc.), how to notify a parent/guardian and how the ill child will be transported home from the off-site activity.
- In-school field trips may also occur. All visitors to the school should follow the public health measures that are in place for the school.

Work Experience

- Work experience may proceed as long as the risk of infection is mitigated for all participants. If the work experience placement is in a workplace, the student is expected to follow health rules set out by the workplace.

International Students

- Once Canada lifts travel restrictions and non-essential international travel resumes, international education programs in Alberta can resume if quarantine requirements and public health orders are followed.

Parent/Guardian Access

- Anyone entering a school must review the self-screening tool prior to entering the school and cannot be admitted if they are feeling unwell.
- Parents, caregivers, volunteers, partners, and other adults entering schools should be minimized.
- Parents/guardians must remain outside of the school to pick-up and drop off their children.
- All visitors in the school must sign in at the main office.
- All parents/guardians are asked to practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distancing throughout their time in the school.

School & Boards

- School Boards and principals can meet in person.
- If meetings are held in-person, participants must review the self-screening questionnaire before entering the school, and all rules for physical distancing and health measures for indoor gatherings must be followed.

Transportation

Student Transportation (Including School Buses)

- Parents and children/students should not be in the pick-up area or enter the bus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Only registered riders will be permitted to board the bus.
- Mask use will be required on Buses for all students, staff, and drivers until the province removes the order for their use on Public Transit.
- Students should be assigned seats and a record of this seating plan should be maintained to assist with contact tracing in the event of a student being a case of COVID-19. Students who live in the same household should be seated together.
- Schools/bus companies should develop procedures for student loading, unloading and transfers that support spacing between all persons (except household members), when possible.
- Children/students should start loading from the back seats to the front of the bus.
- Where feasible, limit the number of students per bench unless from the same household.
- Students from the same household may share seats.
- Students start unloading from the front seats to the back of the bus.
- If there are students from two schools on the same bus, it is recommended to keep students from each school separated by 2 metres (3 rows) if possible.
- A bus cleaning log should be kept. Drivers will clean high touch surfaces in school buses before and after students are on the bus.
- A child who becomes symptomatic during the bus trip should be provided a mask if they are not already wearing one. The driver will contact the school to make the appropriate arrangements to pick up the child/student.
- Students and staff should be discouraged from carpooling unless they are from the same household. If carpooling is necessary, limit the number of people in the vehicle to maintain as much spacing as possible and consider using masks and practice hand hygiene.