



Memorandum

To:	School Staff Principals and Vice-Principals Senior Team
From:	David P. Giroux, Superintendent of School Effectiveness Maureen McGrath, Coordinator of Curriculum and Staff Development
Date:	April 6, 2020
Subject:	ALCDSB Phase 2 Academic Learning and Well Being Plan- Educator Led Emergency Remote Learning

On March 31st, the Government of Ontario extended school closures in Ontario to fight the spread of Covid-19 [ontario-extends-school-and-child-care-closures-to-fight-spread-of-covid-19](#). The same day, they wrote a letter to families outlining their learning from home plan [Letter from the Minister of Education to Ontario Parents](#). The purpose of this memo is to provide information and resource support to all ALCDSB educators regarding the steps for moving to educator-led distance learning due to the current closure of schools. These are unprecedented times and we want to thank all educators in advance for their continued professionalism and their commitment to student learning and well-being.

The weeks ahead will be essential in setting up safe, inclusive, and accessible environments that support asynchronous distance learning. We have created a Learning and Caring Plan to support this implementation process. Included in the plan are a number of steps to support all educators to make a smooth transition to online learning. The steps in the graphic provide an overview of the weeks ahead as educators begin to create a foundation to support curriculum-based learning at home.

ALCDSB Academic Learning and Well Being Plan for Educators

Wherever possible, it is recommended that grade partners/teams plan collaboratively. In preparation for distance learning beginning on April 6th, it will be critical for educators to:

- **Select a Learning Platform**

As a starting point, educators begin by selecting a learning platform from the list of our Board supported tools (FreshGrade, D2L, OneNote) through which they and their students can effectively engage in teaching and learning. The platform is a space for instruction, learning tasks, and feedback to occur. While there is no expectation that educators become experts overnight, it is important for them to sign up for professional development sessions and access the available supports, as needed, which are listed on our ALCDSB Portal.

In all cases, where a digital platform was already being used as part of a blended learning model, it is highly recommended that educators continue to use the same platform.

● **Complete a Curriculum Check: What's Done/What's Not**

Educators review their long-range plans to determine which aspects of the curriculum have been previously addressed this year and which Overall Expectations/Essential Understandings/Big Ideas/Core Skills still need to be taught, practiced, and assessed. For each of the remaining parts, educators consider what existing plans can be readily moved into an asynchronous distance learning environment, what will need to be modified and what cannot easily be transferred.

Asynchronous teaching and learning occur through online channels without real-time interaction.

Educators review IEPs for any students in their class or on their caseload and ensure planning considers any accommodations, modifications, or alternative curriculum expectations. Reach out to your school SERT or Student Services Support Team if you would like assistance or have questions.

Educators should use the Universal Design for Learning framework [UDL Guidelines](#) to plan for students in ways that remove barriers and give students choices in the learning using multiple means of engagement, representation and action and expression.

For learning that is normally hands-on, performance-based, or experiential in nature (e.g., Phys.Ed, Drama/Dance, Music), it may be necessary for teachers to shift their regular approach to more conceptual or theoretical learning. Under these unique circumstances, it is acceptable to significantly modify approaches to best meet expectations.

● **Sequence the Learning**

Once a learning platform has been selected and the curriculum check has been completed, educators determine a sequence of learning (sample *Week at a Glance* planners are available on the Teams pages).

As per the guidelines set out by the Ontario Ministry of Education, educators will create and post weekly curriculum-based learning opportunities online, in timeframes that both respect the unique needs of families and are age-appropriate.

As educators map out the learning sequence for all subject areas, it is important to consider:

- Kindergarten-Grade 3: five hours of work per student/week (focus on literacy and math)
- Grades 4-6: five hours of work per student/week (focus on literacy, math, science and social studies)
- Grades 7-8: 10 hours of work per student/week (focus on math, literacy, science and social studies)
- Grades 9-12: three hours of work per course per week for semestered students; 1.5 hours of work per course per week for non-semestered students (focus on achieving credits/completion/graduation)

The hours listed above refer to the approximate amount of time students would spend on the work assigned by educators. Educator work would include preparation of assigned work and providing feedback or assessment.

● **Assessment and Evaluation**

For elementary students, educators will use **formative** assessment approaches to gather evidence of how students are progressing in their learning. It is expected that educators will provide feedback to their students on their progress. In determining final grades and marks for the final report card, educators will use the evaluation information gathered before March 13th. When in the best interest of students, educators should include evidence of learning completed during the school closure period in their determination of final grades. Reporting on Learning Skills and Work Habits should also reflect information gathered prior to March 13th. Educators should include comments on the final report card if they feel that doing so would support the student's progress. The Kindergarten Communication of Learning will be based on teachers' observations of key learning and growth in learning prior to March 13th. Educators may include comments on growth in learning demonstrated during the school closure period when it is to the child's benefit.

Secondary students will be assigned learning tasks, projects and culminating activities that will be marked by their educators for purposes of **formative** and **summative** evaluation. Educators will communicate results of these marked assignments to students. Results will be used by educators to inform students' final course marks. In keeping with the understanding that marks should represent the most accurate reflection of student work, based on what is reasonable and in the best interest of students during this time, and in recognition of performance prior to March 13th, educators can adjust the weighting of assigned tasks in their determination of a final mark as needed.

The requirement to issue mid-year report cards for secondary students, including graduating students, is suspended for this school year. Final report cards are required for all secondary students.

Reporting on Learning Skills and Work Habits should reflect information gathered prior to March 13th. Educators should choose to include comments on the final report card.

Civics and Citizenship and Career Studies Half-Credit Courses

For students enrolled in Civics and Citizenship and Career Studies half-credit courses in the second semester, their final mark for the half-credit course underway at the time of school closures will be based on work completed as of March 13th. Where appropriate, teachers may adjust this mark in the best interest of students to be a more accurate reflection of their learning. Students are not required to complete any further culminating assignment for this course.

On April 14th, students should begin work on the other half-credit course.

Academic and Well-Being Implementation Plan for Educators

Goal

Week of March 30:

Goal: teacher to decide which online platform to use and start planning through LTS training sessions and curriculum review

Week of April 6:

Goal: Implement Initial learning plan

Week of April 13:

Goal: continue to explore resources and approaches in the online environment with a focus on students who may need additional support

Educator Actions

Step 1

Initial Check in with Families

- access contact information
- share some learning tools and wellness resources
- communicate with in-school partners (Admin, SERT, Student Success, CYW, Guidance, EA's, Chaplains, Itinerant)

Step 2

Select Learning Platform and Review Available Resources

- select Learning Platform
- review process/requirements or students to access platform from home
- access LTS training sessions
- collaborate with in-school partners from Step 1 as well as others (EAs, LRAs)

Step 3

Begin Planning for Learning and Building an Asynchronous Safe, Inclusive, Faith-Filled Learning Environment

- complete a curriculum review
- prepare to sequence learning online
- send communication to students/families to explain online learning platform
- access teacher supports as necessary
- collaborate in online Teams group
- determine your working schedule
- ensure needs of all learners are met

Step 4

Implement Initial Learning Plan

- clarify expectations for students participating in an online learning environment
- complete your Week at a Glance and send out to students
- continue to focus on building inclusive safe and accessible learning online

Continue to implement curriculum - based learning

• Send Communication

In the weeks after March Break, educators were asked to reach out to students to reestablish contact and send positive messages of support

The week of April 6th, information will go out to students and their families to introduce students to this new learning environment, highlight the learning platform, provide initial instructions, and communicate how they will be available for questions.

Educators may have already established a routine for their class that has allowed them to connect with their students. It is suggested that learning outcomes and initial instructions/directions for students for the week be shared with parents/students on Mondays. For our elementary schools, they should take the form of a "Week at a Glance". These may include pre-recorded activities, video clips, digital resources, articles, photos, etc.

Educators' interactions with students may include a recorded message sent to the class, an email, messages sent in Fresh Grade or D2L, etc. If electronic means of communication are not successful in corresponding with students and families, then educators are directed to make a phone call. If

repeated attempts to make contact with a student and/or the parent/guardian are unsuccessful, educators are asked to inform their Vice Principal or Principal.

All educators should participate in meetings with colleagues to address unique equity needs of students. At the elementary level, classroom teachers should connect with their FSL and IAT colleagues to help support and design the week at a glance learning chart.

Educational Assistants and other staff who do not have direct classroom instruction responsibilities, have a wide range of skills and can assist staff as needed to provide differentiated support to students.

• Central Support Teams

Support teams have been created for the following educator groups: Early Years, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Secondary, FSL/IAT and SERT. The support teams are as follows:

Early Years

Sarah Cassidy cassisar@alcdsb.on.ca
Shauna Hoekstra shoekstra@alcdsb.on.ca
Lori McCaw mccaw@alcdsb.on.ca
Casey Wells wellcase@alcdsb.on.ca
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Junior

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Lori McCaw mccaw@alcdsb.on.ca
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Intermediate

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Leslie Beatty(beatlesl@alcdsb.on.ca)
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Each central support team has created a Microsoft Team space where educators can meet virtually to chat, plan, and share ideas with others in similar grade bands within the Board. The central support staff are there to provide technical support and strategies for distance learning. Elementary educators will provide a *Week at a Glance* to outline the workflow (templates can be found on Team pages). This should include the tasks of all classroom partners in order to simplify the flow of information to families.

Please remember to:

- prioritize care;
- acknowledge that this is new, we are finding our way, we all have questions, and we are in this together;
- bridge educator-student relationships from the traditional classroom to a distance learning environment; and
- connect the student to the online class, reminding them that they are an important part of the school.