



2020-21

Legislative International Education Study Group

British Columbia's Approach to Distance Learning, September 2020

Timeline

Schools closed for spring break on March 16, and each school district was responsible for developing its own plan for distance learning by mid-April. Districts have prioritized keeping schools open for children of essential workers and children who require additional support (e.g., those with special educational needs). Schools [partially](#) reopened (i.e., alternating in-person attendance with distance learning, depending on grade level) on June 1. On September 8, 2020, most K-12 schools in British Columbia [reopened](#) with full time in-class learning, with social distancing in place.

Guidance provided to schools and teachers:

The Ministry of Education [announced](#) on March 30 that each school district would develop a distance learning plan for students "as soon as practically possible, no later than mid-April." The Ministry [provided](#) support for districts' local planning. British Columbia also released a "[K-12 Education Restart Plan](#)" to provide guidance on a five-stage school reopening plan.

Resources provided to schools, teachers, and families:

The province developed a [Keep Learning](#) website of distance learning resources for families to use at home. These are divided into four categories: Learning from Home; Everyday Learning Activities; Keeping Healthy; and Resources. The first three categories focus primarily on general recommendations, sometimes by grade span (e.g., advice for distance learning, like primary school students should "take breaks when needed"; and ideas for learning opportunities by grade span associated with everyday activities, like budgeting or gardening).

The Ministry purchased licenses for [Zoom](#) videoconferencing for all public and independent K-12 schools in the province. Districts can decide whether to use Zoom.

The province released a set of [FAQs](#) for families outlining its approach, including what families should expect during distance learning and how schools and teachers would approach assessment, grading, and determining eligibility for graduation. They also have a [Back to School Plan](#) website to provide detailed information on what parents need to know for school reopening.

Impact on Assessments

The Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment, which is a requirement for secondary school graduation, was canceled in April 2020. Only those grade 12 students who were on track to graduate other than taking this assessment were allowed to take it in June 2020. Other provincial exams (for 4th and 7th graders) were canceled.