

# Seventh-day Adventist® Church

**EXTERNAL  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MARCH 16, 2020

## ALBERTA CONFERENCE

### Dear Alberta Adventist Education Parents

**W**e have entered uncertain and unprecedented times, and the message I want to share with you is one of hope. I was sent a text this morning from one of our schools of a video of the teachers singing together the beautiful song “Because He Lives.” What a message of hope we have.

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know He holds the future  
And life is worth the living, just because He lives*

With the announcement yesterday of the indefinite closure of schools from Alberta Education, we now have to adjust to a new normal. I want to assure you our Alberta Adventist educators already started planning and preparing for ensuring the continued education of the students entrusted to our care.

Every decision made right now is fluid and dynamic, but I do want to communicate with you what we know at the time of writing. Please note that the decisions we make are following Alberta Health Services (AHS) and Alberta Education guidelines, in consultation with Conference Administration.

### Why did schools have to close?

These are challenging and difficult times for everyone, as we all work together to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Alberta’s Chief Medical Officer and the Alberta government made the decision to close. We support this decision.

### How long will this last?

The Government has closed schools indefinitely, and we do not know for how long, but have been advised that this will not be a short term closure. The Government, families and our schools want students back as soon as it is safe to do so.

### We work, what am I supposed to do about child care?

We are understanding and are sorry about this challenge. The Government acknowledges that this difficult decision would cause significant disruption to families and employers. We understand that the Government has asked employers to be flexible and are looking at supports to assist families. Many employers are also facing these disruptions with a reduction in business. Hopefully, this will allow them the flexibility to support families.

### What is going to happen to my child’s schooling?

In the announcement, the Government committed to the following:

- Students will receive final grades
- Provincial Achievement Tests have been cancelled.
- At this time, Diploma Exams for grade 12 students are still expected to be written.
- Students will graduate
- Post-secondary institutions will be asked to do all they can to accommodate graduates faced with these changes



**What will happen to my child's access to education?**

In making the announcement, the Government pledged that school staff will still be working and are expected to support the continuity of learning for students. We are developing plans for staff to continue providing learning for all students. This process will take a few days and updates will be provided once those plans are finalized. We ask for your patience and to please give us a bit of time to work through the details. Please do not contact teachers until we have sent information to families.

**What if we don't have access to the internet for lessons that could potentially be on-line?**

We are considering the needs of our families and will accommodate lessons and learning as best we can. More details will be provided in the coming days as to how learning will continue.

**Are we able to come to the school and pick-up books, personal possessions and supplies?**

We kindly ask that you wait to be contacted by the school directly regarding what the next steps will be. You will be informed of the process for pick-up in the next few days.

Once again, I sincerely thank you for your patience and understanding. Communique will continue to come from both my office and from the local school level. We will move forward with integrity, hearts full of love and compassion, heads less anxious of worry because we know God is in control, and hopefully less concern because we are all doing our part.

God bless,

**Mrs. Ronda Ziakris**

*Education Director, MEd, BEd*  
rziakris@albertaadventist.ca  
(403) 342-5044 ext 200

