

Education Amendment Act, 2024

Parent Guide

Background

The [Education Amendment Act, 2024](#) (formerly Bill 27) amends the *Education Act* to support families and students navigating complex conversations around gender identity, sexual orientation, and human sexuality, while also supporting continuity in a student's learning during a public health emergency or states of emergency.

The amendments create greater transparency between school authorities and parents and result in greater consistency for students, parents and teachers.

Amendments related to notification and consent for health measures, the right to education during emergencies, and updated requirements for shifts to at-home learning took effect on March 1, 2025. School authorities are required to develop related policies by September 1, 2025.

The remaining amendments to the *Education Act* are anticipated to take effect on September 1, 2025. This includes changes related to:

Parental notification and consent of preferred names or pronouns

Alberta Education recognizes the importance of open communication between schools and families while ensuring students feel supported in their learning environment.

If a student under the age of 18 requests that school staff refer to them using a new gender identity-related preferred name or pronouns, the school authority is required to notify the student's parent. For students under 16 years of age, school staff may only use the new preferred name or pronouns in school once parental consent has been provided.

If a student requests access to assistance before parental notification, or if notification is reasonably expected to cause emotional or psychological harm to the student, school authorities will ensure the student is provided with counselling or other assistance to help them through the process.

Students can access guidance counsellors, social workers and other school-based supports without parental consent. After notification has occurred, students and families can also connect with affordable mental health services through [Counselling Alberta](#).

Parental notification and opt-in for subject matter dealing with gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality

As a parent, it is important that you are informed about your child's education. When classroom subject matter deals primarily and explicitly with gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality, schools must notify you at least 30 days in advance and provide you with the option to opt your child in for this instruction. This requirement does not apply to other subject matter or incidental references to these topics.

Also, once the amendments take effect, all school authorities must have publicly available policies in place for parental notification and opt-in consent. Among other things, these policies must ensure that:

- You get sufficient information and detail to make an informed decision
- If you provide consent, you have the choice to opt your child in either partially or fully

These changes support transparency and help you stay actively involved in your child's learning.

Minister approval of learning and teaching resources and external parties that deal with gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality

To ensure transparency and consistency, the Minister of Education must approve any learning and teaching resources that deal primarily and explicitly with gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality before they are used in classrooms, unless they are specifically for religious instruction.

If an external party provides or uses learning and teaching resources on these topics—whether in the context of religious instruction or otherwise—the external party itself must also receive Minister approval.

These measures help ensure that parents are involved in their child's learning and understand what is being taught in schools.

Policies for at-home learning

School authorities must have clear policies in place to support students and families if there are circumstances where an in-person learning option is not available. By September 1, 2025, school authorities will establish and publish policies to minimize disruptions and ensure learning continues smoothly.

These policies will include:

- factors the school authority will consider when deciding if learning should be in person or at home or a combination of both
- opportunities for continuing in-person learning at buildings other than the building where students regularly attend school
- how the board plans to provide at-home learning while fulfilling its obligations under the *Education Act* and the regulations
- how the board plans to make reasonable efforts to enable students to participate in at-home learning

These policies will help ensure that, even when in-person learning is unavailable, your child's education remains a priority.

Timing

The amendments are anticipated to come into effect September 1, 2025, and will apply to all school authorities in Alberta, including public, separate, francophone, charter, and independent (private) schools for the 2025/26 school year.

Engagement

Alberta's government engaged with approximately 250 stakeholders including school boards, parents and teacher representatives, superintendents, mental health organizations and other education stakeholders about policy implementation.

For more information

If you have any questions about the policies and procedures coming into effect September 1, 2025, please contact your local school and/or school authority directly. They are your best point of contact for how these policies will apply to your child.