

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME—WHAT IS IT?

Instructional time definitions can be found in the *Guide to Education* available from Alberta Education. Simply put, instructional time can be described as being time spent by teachers working directly with students to achieve mastery and learning of the Alberta *Program of Studies*. That being said, there are some nuances depending on what grade level is being taught. The specific definitions from the *Guide to Education* are provided below.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ECS)

Definition of instruction:

Instruction is the process in which Alberta certificated teachers take responsibility for ensuring that learning activities for children are directed toward achieving the outcomes of approved programs of study and/or Individualized Program Plans (IPPs) through:

- face-to-face interaction with children for the purpose of teaching and assessing children's achievement of outcomes, and/or
- interaction with children who are engaged in classroom learning in a Kindergarten, preschool, playschool, daycare or child-care setting, and/or family-oriented programming sessions.

Instructional time:

Instructional time includes time scheduled for the purposes of instruction and other activities for children where direct child–teacher interaction and supervision are maintained. A school may use a maximum of 35 hours of instructional time for activities, such as:

- visits to the child's home
- staggered entry
- small group days
- demonstration of child learning in child–parent–teacher conferences (child must be in attendance) that promote the transition of children from home to school and encourage communication and relationship building.

Instructional time does not include:

- teacher convention days
- professional development days
- teacher planning days
- staff meetings
- statutory and school authority-declared holidays
- lunch breaks
- recesses
- time taken for the registration of children.

GRADES 1 TO 9

Definition of instruction:

Instruction is the process in which Alberta certificated teachers take responsibility for ensuring that learning activities for students are directed toward achieving the outcomes of approved programs of study and/or IPPs through:

- interaction with students, either face-to-face or using information and communication technology, for the purpose of teaching and assessing student achievement of outcomes, and/or
- interaction with students who are engaged in classroom learning, self-directed instructional resources, independent study, online education and/or distance education, and/or
- supervision of student workplace learning.

Instructional time:

Instructional time includes time scheduled for purposes of instruction, examinations/testing and other student activities where direct student–teacher interaction and supervision are maintained.

Instructional time does not include:

- teacher convention days
- professional development days
- parent–teacher interview days
- teacher planning days
- staff meetings
- statutory and school authority-declared holidays
- lunch breaks
- breaks between classes
- recesses
- time taken for the registration of students
- extracurricular activities.

FOR GRADES 10–12

Definition of instruction:

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Instructional time:

Instructional time includes time scheduled for purposes of instruction, examinations/testing and other student activities where direct student–teacher interaction and supervision are maintained.

Instructional time does not include:

- teacher convention days
- professional development days
- parent–teacher interview days
- teacher planning days
- staff meetings
- statutory and school authority-declared holidays
- lunch breaks
- breaks between classes
- supervised study halls
- time taken for the registration of students
- extracurricular activities
- graduation/commencement rehearsals and ceremonies.

There are additional refinements to the definition of instructional time provided by an arbitration decision issued December 15, 2009 by David Jones from a grievance filed by the ATA in Calgary RSCCD No 1. Mr Jones identified the following as “assigned tasks” and therefore not instruction:

- junior high home room
- high school “check out” (where ID lanyards are collected at the end of the day).