

State Secretary

SAXON STATE MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE
Postfach 10 09 10 | 01079 Dresden

to all parents of students
attending publicly run schools
in the Free State of Saxony

Cc:

To the parents of students attending
independent schools

Dresden, 23 April 2021

Changes to school operations from 26 April 2021

Dear parents,

We must shortly all prepare for another round of extensive school restrictions that particularly affect the children. I know how much of a strain this puts on families, and how concerned you are about your children's development. In their amendment of the Infectious Disease Protection Act, the federal legislators have ceased to provide scope for face-to-face learning at any schools. The rules on alternating class attendance when the incidence rate is 100 or above, and the prohibition of face-to-face learning when the incidence rate is 165 or above, apply immediately.

Teachers and we at the Saxon State Ministry for Education and Culture will continue to do all possible to ensure your children have good opportunities for ongoing learning, even in these circumstances.

We have provided your principal with recommendations on how to proceed. Together with their teaching staff, they will structure school operations according to the very varied staffing and spatial arrangements. If face-to-face learning is possible with alternating attendance, schools will follow the rules that came into effect in mid-March 2021.

The obligation established by the federal legislators for primary schools to adopt the alternating-attendance model puts us, the schools and families in an extremely difficult position. We have to completely overhaul the existing concept of set group/class sizes. Primary schools need to simultaneously plan lessons, emergency care and after-school care – usually all at the same place. To meet the high demand for staff, we are arranging for additional workers to be employed without any tedious bureaucracy. But this unfortunately takes more than a few days to organise. We ask for your patience and understanding, as solutions first need to be found and then continuously optimised.

Page 1 of 2



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www.smk.sachsen.de/kontakt.htm

During the alternating-attendance phase, face-to-face learning should be interspersed with home learning. The aim of home learning is to support the material learned in face-to-face classes by practising and consolidating it. To do this, students will of course also receive tasks to complete. The assistance provided to students during home learning cannot be as intensive as seen in any and all of the previous home-learning phases, because the teachers then have to hold face-to-face lessons for the other half of the class while your child is learning from home.

We have applied an additional buffer, and significantly further expanded memory capacities, to enable increased use of the LernSax platform. Support by schools is particularly important during phases when no face-to-face learning is permitted for anything other than final-year classes and grade-4 classes. We advised our expectations for the home-learning setup back in February.

A plan is already in place to cope with the gaps in knowledge and skills. The reduced course content for this school year is defined in such a way so as to ensure children are at as similar a level as possible. And even in the next school year, teachers will be given the necessary scope to handle the students' varying levels of learning. The students will catch up on any areas in which they may be lagging.

Further information on how school operations will be as of Monday is available on our blog www.bildung.sachsen.de/blog.

It is a difficult situation for everyone. Principals are obliged to enforce the rules. They and their staff are doing their best.

With commitment and dedication, we will be able to end the school year well. Please continue to encourage your children to keep at it. Provide them with support and optimism.

I wish you and your families all the best and lots of strength. Stay well and positive.

Kind regards,



Christian Piwarz