

Education Ministry announces early 4-week spring vacation, starting Sunday

As part of the preventive and precautionary measures aimed at maintaining safety of students and in line with the efforts made to contain the spread of coronavirus, COVID-19, the Ministry of Education has announced a four-week closure of all public and private schools and higher education institutions across the UAE, starting Sunday.

In a statement released today, the Ministry said the decision comes as a proactive step that is consistent with the developments in the field of mitigating impacts of crises and natural disaster and out of keenness to provide highest standards of safety within the school and higher education communities.

According to the decision, the spring vacation, initially scheduled to start on 29th March to 12th April, will instead start next Sunday. A pilot programme for distance education will be implemented during the last weeks of the vacation to ensure education continuity and to avoid any impact on school days.



The Ministry said the decision takes into consideration the interests of students and ensures that the distance education initiative is properly applied.

The decision grants the private schools and higher education institutions the freedom to apply the procedures they see necessary to guarantee education continuity.

The Ministry will utilise the vacation to conduct massive operations to sterilise school and university facilities and buses, in accordance with the international standards for health, safety and hygiene.

On Monday, the Ministry launched a pilot stage of distance learning initiative through its website for all government schools nationwide.

The self-learning was part of the ministry's plans to continue the learning process during times of natural crises and disasters, said the ministry in a statement.

The ministry directed school administrations to launch an awareness campaign on distance education for all targeted groups, including parents, students, teachers and administrators. The campaign should elaborate on the tasks assigned to each category, and to direct those concerned to access the ministry's training platform to see how to implement interactive lessons for distance education, and to ensure availability of electronic devices while finding alternative solutions in cooperation with parents.

It also called on parents to create an appropriate learning environment at home by providing internet services, other distance education resources like computers, tablets, and smartphones. Parents are also advised to encourage students to practice distance learning as per the subject and time schedule approved by their schools.

Students are also obliged to commit themselves to the public policy of using learning devices during the distance education process, during which other distracting activities like photography and web-browsing should be prohibited.

The ministry urged both teachers and students to seek technical support if they face any difficulties or challenges by contacting 7017000-06 or by visiting Sd@moe.gov.ae "Implementation of this system is prioritised by the ministry to provide an interactive e-platform for distance education for all and to overcome time and geographical barriers, harness educational potential and advanced technologies to ease student stress," it added.

3/4/2020

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Page last updated on: 3/4/2020
Website last updated on: 1/6/2021



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