

Establishing a Private School

Application Process and Requirements

Background

The Government of Alberta recognizes choice in education, including parents having the right to choose private schools for their children.

Application Process

The application process and requirements for those who wish to establish a private school in Alberta are as follows:

1. Determine the type of private school you wish to establish and the programs you will offer.

Section 28 of the [School Act](#) authorizes two types of private schools to operate in Alberta: registered and accredited.

Notify Alberta Education of your intent to establish a private school by contacting School Accreditation, Standards and Print Services at edc.privateschools@gov.ab.ca or 780-427-7235 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000). Information and the application forms will be provided to you to complete, along with a list of supporting documents to submit.

2. Submit the application and required documents by January 20.

Complete applications received by the due date are considered according to the following process (note: an application may be rejected at any stage of this process, and if so it does not continue to the next stage):

- i. a team from Alberta Education will review the application;
- ii. an onsite interview with the applicant will be conducted by a team from Alberta Education;

- iii. the applicant submits an Annual Operating Plan (AOP), refer to the [Submitting the Annual Operating Plan](#) fact sheet for information; and
- iv. the Minister of Education determines if the school is approved to operate.

3. Expect Alberta Education to monitor the private school.

In the first year, Alberta Education will monitor the private school operator and the school for compliance with Alberta Education requirements.

Private School Types in Alberta

Registered private schools, defined under Section 28(1) of the [School Act](#), must meet the requirements in the [Private Schools Regulation](#). Registered private schools are not eligible for Alberta Education funding.

Accredited private schools, defined under Section 28(2) of the [School Act](#), must continue to meet the requirements of a registered private school. Those applying to become an accredited private school must meet additional requirements as stated in the [School Act](#) and in the [Private Schools Regulation](#).

Accredited private schools may apply for a grant pursuant to the Minister's authority to make grants under the [Government Organization Act](#) and the [Education Grants Regulation](#). To be eligible for funding, accredited schools must meet additional requirements in the [Private Schools Regulation](#), and operate for one year. Refer to the most recent [Funding Manual for School Authorities](#) for details on applicable funding rates.

See [Requirements for Establishing a Private School Chart](#) for more information on registered and accredited private schools.

Heritage Language Schools are a type of accredited private school that offers approved or authorized language and culture courses outside regular school hours to students who receive their basic education program at another school authority. A heritage language school may be funded or non-funded. If funded, a person who holds an Alberta teaching certificate must be designated as the principal.

Designated Special Education Private Schools (DSEPS) are accredited, funded private schools that have been given special approval and funding by the Minister, where the sole purpose of the school is to serve students who are identified with a mild, moderate or severe disability.

An accredited, funded private school wishing to become a DSEPS must submit a written request for approval by April 30 of the prior school year to Alberta Education, stating their reasons for doing so. They must also indicate this intention on their AOP.

Programming Considerations

A **special education** program consistent with the [Requirements for Special Education in Accredited-Funded Private Schools](#) must be offered to any student with special needs that an accredited, funded private school enrolls.

Private school operators are not obligated to admit every student who seeks admission. If a private school operator enrolls a student with special education needs, Alberta Education requires that operator to provide appropriate programming to that student for the school year that the student is enrolled.

An **early childhood services (ECS)** program may be offered by an accredited private school operator. The accredited private school operator must apply to commence an ECS program and meet the

requirements set out in the [Early Childhood Services Regulation](#), including offering a Kindergarten program that complies with the [Kindergarten Program Statement](#). Funding is available from the first year of operation, and operators must provide access to a minimum of 475 hours of instruction. Private schools who offer ECS programs can only charge reasonable instructional fees for hours of instruction beyond 475 hours and non-instructional fees to offset costs, such as supplies, snacks, and field trips.

A **home education program** is an educational program where a parent provides a home education program to a student under the supervision of an associate private school. Under the [Home Education Regulation](#), the parent is responsible for developing, administering and managing the home education program. The associate private school also has responsibilities as described in the [Home Education Regulation](#). Only an accredited, funded private school may be an associate private school.

A **shared responsibility program** is a program where a student's parent providing a home education program to the student and an Alberta funded school authority agree to share responsibility for the student's education. Two conditions must be met for this to occur:

1. The school authority portion of the agreement must consist of a program where an Alberta certificated teacher, employed by a school board or an accredited-funded private school, is responsible for planning, resource selection, instruction, assessment and evaluation of student progress in selected courses that follow the Alberta programs of study or locally developed courses. The school authority must be responsible for at least a minimum of:
 - 50 per cent of the student's program in grades 1 to 9; and
 - 20 per cent of the student's program in grades 10 to 12.

2. The home education portion of the agreement must consist of a program provided by a parent under the authority of the [School Act](#) and the [Home Education Regulation](#). The parent is responsible for developing, administering and managing the home education program. The school authority is responsible for supervising the home education program.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the private school application process and requirements, please contact School Accreditation, Standards and Print Services at edc.privateschools@gov.ab.ca or 780-427-7235 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000).

Requirements for establishing a private school The private school operator is responsible to the Minister of Education for meeting the requirements of provincial legislation and regulations set out in this chart.	Registered	Accredited
The private school operator provides parents or prospective students with written notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) that students attending the school may not necessarily be placed at the same grade level if the student registers in another school; b) that the school cannot grant credit for senior high school courses; c) of the qualifications of the members of the instructional staff; and d) of the general liability insurance coverage held by the operator in the event of accident or death. 	✓	
The private school operator provides a programs of study that meets the goals and standards adopted or approved by the Minister consistent with the Ministerial Order on Student Learning .	✓	✓
The private school operator meets standards of student achievement and achievement testing acceptable to the Minister.	✓	✓
The private school operator agrees to regular evaluation and monitoring by the Minister.	✓	✓
The private school operator meets all local and provincial health, safety (fire) and building standards (zoning and building code).	✓	✓
The private school operator maintains individual student records consistent with the Student Record Regulation .	✓	✓
The private school operator makes rules for the discipline of students and for the suspension and expulsion of students that incorporate the principles of fundamental justice and provides copies to the students and their parents.	✓	✓
The private school operator annually submits to the Minister an AOP.	✓	✓
The private school operator develops and maintains policies for the evaluation of students; teacher growth, supervision and evaluation; safety for outdoor education and field trips; a policy related to a health protocol; and a policy related to Section 45.1 of the School Act .		✓
The private school operator employs teachers with valid Alberta teaching certificates issued in accordance with the Certification of Teachers Regulation .		✓
The private school operator may employ a competent individual to teach a language, culture or religion under the supervision of a teacher holding a valid Alberta teaching certificate.		✓
During a school year, the private school operator offers students in grades 1 through 9 access to a minimum of 950 hours of instruction and offers students in grades 10 through 12 access to a minimum of 1,000 hours of instruction.		✓
Seven or more students from two or more families are enrolled and continue to be enrolled in the school.		✓

Additional Requirements To Be Eligible For Funding	R	A
The private school operator is incorporated as a society under the Societies Act , or as a non-profit company under Part 9 of the Companies Act , or operates under a special act of the legislature.		✓
The private school operator appoints a secretary and a treasurer, or a secretary-treasurer, and reports their names and addresses to the Minister.		✓
The private school operator appoints an auditor who is registered and qualified to perform an audit engagement under the Chartered Professional Accountants Act and reports this individual's name and address to the Minister.		✓
The private school operator operates for a minimum of one school year, unless otherwise approved by the Minister, before being eligible to receive a grant under the Education Grants Regulation .		✓
The private school operator establishes a parent advisory council if the parents of students enrolled in the school do not constitute a majority of the members of the operating board of the school.		✓
The school principal holds a valid Alberta teaching certificate issued in accordance with the Certification of Teachers Regulation .		✓
The private school operator follows the requirements for teaching the Alberta Programs of Study .		✓
The private school operator uses provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.		✓
The private school operator complies with provincial senior high school graduation requirements as described in the Guide to Education .		✓
The private school operator is, if a student is expelled, responsible for the student's education program, and ensures that the student continues to have access to an education program for the remainder of the school year.		✓
The private school operator must annually submit a Three-Year Education Plan and an Annual Education Results Report consistent with the Policy and Requirements for Accredited Funded Private School Authority Planning and Results Reporting .		✓
The private school operator annually submits to the Minister a Budget Report and Audited Financial Statements along with the Auditor's Report, Notes to the Financial Statements, Management Letter, and Independence Letter.		✓
The private school operator keeps in force a blanket fidelity bond covering the operator and employees of the school while carrying out duties relating to any money or security belonging to or held by the school. The amount of the bond shall be the lesser of \$50,000 or 40 per cent of the operator's provincial funding plus any surplus from the previous operational year.		✓
The private school operator has a general liability insurance policy in the minimum amount of \$2 million for each occurrence of loss or damage resulting from bodily injury to or death of one or more persons, and for loss or damage to property, regardless of the number of claims arising from any one occurrence.		✓