



POLICY TITLE:

At-Home Learning Where No In-Person Learning Option Is Provided

Policy Created: November 2025

Initial Review: Draft - November 19, 2025

Board Approval:

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1.1 Establish clear parameters for when **Independent School Authority Ltd** (“the Authority”) may provide **at-home learning without a corresponding in-person learning option**.

1.2 Ensure that any such arrangements are **consistent with Alberta Education legislation and regulations**, including but not limited to the *Education Act* and the **In-person Learning Regulation, Alta Reg 13/2025**.

1.3 Protect students’ **right of access to in-person learning**, as required by the *In-person Learning Regulation*, except in narrowly defined and lawful circumstances.

1.4 Provide administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, and students with **clear expectations and processes** for planning, delivering, and supporting at-home learning where no in-person option is available.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all **Authority-operated schools and programs** that provide education to students in **Grades 1–12**.

2.2 This policy applies to **all employees and contractors** involved in the design, delivery, and support of at-home learning programs.

2.3 This policy does **not** apply to:

- Parent-directed **home education** programs governed by the *Education Act* and associated regulations and Ministerial Orders; or
 - Short-term, incidental at-home learning provided to individual students (e.g., homework, temporary illness) where in-person learning remains available.
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3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Primacy of In-Person Learning

In accordance with the *In-person Learning Regulation, Alta Reg 13/2025*, the Authority affirms that **in-person learning is the primary and preferred mode of instructional delivery** for students in Grades 1–12, and that students are entitled to an **in-person learning option** when the Authority offers an education program.

3.2 Legislative Compliance

The Authority will operate any at-home learning programs **in compliance with the In-person Learning Regulation (Alta Reg 13/2025)**, the *Education Act*, and any applicable Ministerial Orders or directives of the Minister of Education.

3.3 Limited and Exceptional Use of At-Home-Only Learning

At-home learning where no in-person option exists shall be **rare, time-limited, and used only when expressly permitted** under Alta Reg 13/2025 or under a specific **Ministerial exemption**.

3.4 Equity, Inclusion, and Fairness

Decisions regarding at-home-only learning will consider the **diverse needs of learners** and will be made **inclusively, equitably, and fairly**.

3.5 Transparency and Collaboration

The Authority is committed to **clear, timely communication** with parents/guardians and students and to engaging them as partners in planning and supporting at-home learning.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

4.1 At-Home Learning

Planned instruction and assessment delivered to students primarily while they are **physically located at home or off-site**, using digital, print, or other approved means, under the direction of an Authority-assigned teacher.

4.2 In-Person Learning

Instruction and assessment provided to students **physically present** in a school or Authority-approved site under the supervision of a certificated teacher, as contemplated in the In-person Learning Regulation.

4.3 At-Home-Only Arrangement

A situation where **no in-person learning option** is available from the Authority for a student's education program, and the student's instruction is provided entirely through at-home learning.

4.4 Ministerial Exemption / Ministerial Order

A written order issued by the Minister of Education that **exempts the Authority from some or all requirements** of the In-person Learning Regulation and may impose additional conditions.

4.5 Home Education

A parent-directed education program provided in accordance with the *Education Act* and associated regulations and Ministerial Orders, distinct from Authority-directed at-home learning.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context (Alta Reg 13/2025 Alignment)

5.1 The Authority acknowledges that under the **In-person Learning Regulation, Alta Reg 13/2025**, when the Authority offers an education program to students in Grades 1–12, it must **provide in-person learning** and may not require students to participate only in at-home learning, except as permitted under that Regulation or a Ministerial exemption.

5.2 **At-home-only arrangements** may occur **only** when:

- 5.2.1 The Minister of Education has issued a **Ministerial Order under the In-person Learning Regulation, Alta Reg 13/2025**, exempting the Authority from the in-person learning requirement for specified students, grades, schools, or time periods and authorizing at-home-only arrangements; or
- 5.2.2 A student is registered in **home education** pursuant to the *Education Act* and associated regulations and is **not enrolled** in an Authority-operated in-person education program.

5.3 Unless a valid exemption or Ministerial Order applies, the Authority will **not structure its education programs** in a way that denies students an **in-person option**, even if at-home or online learning is also offered.

6. Conditions Under Which At-Home-Only Learning May Be Used

6.1 Ministerial Exemption Scenarios

The Authority may implement at-home-only learning where:

- 6.1.1 A **Ministerial Order or exemption** issued under the In-person Learning Regulation (Alta Reg 13/2025) authorizes the Authority to provide at-home-only learning to some or all students in response to specified circumstances (for example, labour disruptions, public health directives, or emergencies); and
- 6.1.2 The Authority complies fully with **all terms, limits, and conditions** in that Ministerial Order, including any constraints on:
 - The **students, grades, schools, or programs** affected;
 - The **duration** of the at-home-only arrangement; and
 - Any required **supports, reporting, or communication** with Alberta Education and with parents/guardians.

6.2 Home Education

At-home-only learning may also occur when:

- 6.2.1 Parents/guardians have chosen a **home education program** under the *Education Act* and associated regulations; and
- 6.2.2 The student is **not enrolled** in an Authority-operated in-person program (except as allowed by home education arrangements, e.g., part-time enrolment).

In such cases, the lack of in-person instruction reflects a **parental choice under home education**, not a denial of in-person learning by the Authority.

6.3 Prohibited Uses (Consistency with Alta Reg 13/2025)

Unless permitted by Alta Reg 13/2025 or a valid Ministerial Order, the Authority shall **not**:

- 6.3.1 Require all students (or all students in a particular school, grade, or program) to receive their education **only through at-home learning**;
 - 6.3.2 Deny a student the opportunity for **in-person learning** in the Authority's education program while providing at-home learning options to others; or
 - 6.3.3 Use at-home-only learning as a means to **exclude or indirectly remove** students from in-person learning, including students with disabilities or complex needs.
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7. Planning and Implementation Requirements for At-Home-Only Learning

When an at-home-only arrangement is lawfully in place under section 6, the following requirements apply.

7.1 Continuity of Learning

7.1.1 The Authority shall make **reasonable efforts** to ensure that each affected student can continue in the **same or a comparable set of courses and education program** they were pursuing before the at-home-only arrangement began, subject to any conditions in a Ministerial Order.

7.1.2 If certain courses cannot reasonably be maintained in at-home-only form (e.g., specialized options), the Authority will:

- Prioritize courses **required for progression and graduation**;
- Consider the student's **learning plan** and post-secondary or career goals; and
- Provide **alternative pathways** (e.g., course substitution, deferred completion, or future in-person offerings) where feasible.

7.2 Instructional Design and Delivery

7.2.1 Principals and teachers shall design at-home-only learning to be **organized, purposeful, and aligned** with Alberta curriculum and Authority program outcomes.

7.2.2 The Authority shall make **reasonable efforts** to provide:

- 7.2.2.1 **Regular opportunities for synchronous instruction or engagement** (e.g., live online lessons, virtual meetings, scheduled phone/video check-ins); and
- 7.2.2.2 **Asynchronous learning materials** that students can access independently (e.g., recorded lessons, assignments, readings).

7.2.3 Instructional design must consider:

- Student access to **technology and connectivity**;
- The needs of students requiring **accommodations, modifications, or specialized supports**; and
- Age-appropriate expectations for **online engagement and screen time**.

7.3 Assessment, Reporting, and Graduation

7.3.1 Assessment during at-home-only learning will follow the Authority's **assessment, evaluation, and reporting policies**, consistent with Alberta Education requirements.

7.3.2 For courses tied to **provincial assessments or diploma examinations**, the Authority will:

- Provide up-to-date information regarding **exam requirements or changes** as communicated by Alberta Education;
 - Work with students and parents/guardians to ensure necessary **assessments are completed**, including in-person components where required; and
 - Support students in understanding the implications for **course credit, graduation, and post-secondary pathways**.
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8. Equity, Inclusion, and Student Supports

8.1 Equitable Access

8.1.1 The Authority will consider students **inclusively, equitably, and fairly** when implementing at-home-only learning, as contemplated by Ministerial expectations under Alta Reg 13/2025.

8.1.2 Where feasible, the Authority may provide or facilitate:

- Access to **devices, learning materials, or connectivity supports** for students who lack them; and
- **Alternative formats** such as paper-based materials for families with limited digital access.

8.2 Students With Disabilities and Complex Needs

8.2.1 The Authority will make **reasonable efforts** to continue supports outlined in students' **Individual Program Plans (IPPs)** or other planning documents, adapted for the at-home context.

8.2.2 Related services (e.g., counselling, specialized instruction, therapies) may be delivered:

- In-person where permitted and safe;
 - Through **virtual or telepractice** approaches; or
 - Through consultation with parents/guardians to adjust program goals and expectations.
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9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Board of Directors

- Approves this policy and major amendments.
- Receives and reviews reports on any **use of at-home-only learning** under Alta Reg 13/2025 or Ministerial Order.

9.2 Head of Schools

- Ensures Authority-wide **compliance with the In-person Learning Regulation (Alta Reg 13/2025)** and related Ministerial Orders.
- Authorizes and oversees any at-home-only implementation and associated **communication with Alberta Education**.
- Ensures system-level planning, supports, and risk management are in place.

9.3 Principals

- Implement this policy at the school level in alignment with any applicable **Ministerial Order**.
- Develop and communicate **school-based plans** for at-home-only learning, including schedules, expectations, and supports.
- Monitor student engagement and address barriers to participation.

9.4 Teachers

- Plan and deliver **high-quality at-home learning** experiences, both synchronous and asynchronous where feasible.
- Assess student learning and provide regular **feedback and communication** with students and parents/guardians.
- Identify and report concerns regarding student **engagement, progress, or well-being**.

9.5 Parents/Guardians

- Support students in engaging with at-home learning to the extent reasonably possible.
- Communicate with school staff regarding **technology limitations, learning needs, or barriers** to participation.

9.6 Students

- Participate actively in learning activities and communications.
- Inform teachers or school staff if they are experiencing **difficulties accessing or completing** learning tasks.

10. Communication

10.1 When an at-home-only arrangement is implemented under Alta Reg 13/2025 or a Ministerial Order, the Authority shall provide **written communication** to parents/guardians and students that includes:

- The **reason** for the at-home-only arrangement (e.g., Ministerial Order, emergency);
- The **scope** (who is affected, which schools/grades/programs);
- The **anticipated duration**, if known;
- An overview of **instructional delivery** (schedules, platforms, expectations);
- Information about **assessment, exams, and reporting**; and
- Contact information for **school and Authority staff**.

10.2 The Authority will provide **regular updates** if conditions, timelines, or expectations change.

11. Privacy, Technology, and Digital Citizenship

11.1 At-home-only learning must be conducted in accordance with the Authority's **privacy, records management, technology use, and digital citizenship policies** and any applicable legislation.

11.2 Staff and students must use only **Authority-approved platforms and tools** for instruction and communication, and must protect the confidentiality and security of student information.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 The Superintendent is responsible for **monitoring implementation** of this policy and ensuring that any at-home-only arrangements remain consistent with **Alta Reg 13/2025 and related Ministerial Orders**.

12.2 This policy shall be **reviewed at least every three (3) years**, or earlier if:

- The In-person Learning Regulation is amended or replaced;
 - New Ministerial Orders regarding in-person or at-home learning are issued that materially affect the Authority; or
 - Practice and feedback indicate that revisions are needed to better support students, families, and staff.
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13. Related Legislation, Regulations, and Policies

- *Education Act* (Alberta)
- **In-person Learning Regulation, Alta Reg 13/2025**
- Relevant Alberta Education Ministerial Orders (current and future)
- ISA policy: **Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting**
- ISA policy: **Inclusive Education**
- ISA policy: **Technology and Digital Citizenship**
- ISA policy: **Privacy and Records Management**