

Registered Independent Schools Handbook  
**How to Register a School in Saskatchewan**



## Introduction

The handbook provides information to groups or individuals interested in starting a registered independent school in Saskatchewan. The handbook explains the registration process and answers some commonly asked questions.

In Saskatchewan, students of compulsory school age must attend a public or separate school, attend a funded or non-funded registered independent school or be home-schooled. A registered independent school provides its students of compulsory school age with an exemption from attendance at a public or separate school.

## Legislation, Regulations and Policies

All independent schools in Saskatchewan must be registered with the Ministry of Education. Applications for registration are to be made before a school admits students.

*The Education Act, 1995*, makes provision for the registration of independent schools by private groups or organizations. The purpose of these provisions is to recognize the right of parents to raise and educate their children in accordance with their faith or conscientious beliefs.

*The Education Act, 1995*, states:

““independent school” means an institution:

- (a) in which instruction is provided to pupils of compulsory school age; and
- (b) that is controlled and administered by a person other than a public authority;

4(1) The Minister may:

- (x) make provision for the registration of independent schools;
- (y) make provision for the inspection and supervision of registered independent schools;”

**Registration of an independent school does not automatically grant the school the ability to provide students with eligibility for secondary level credits.**

**Only registered independent schools/high schools that have received additional Ministry of Education authorization and approval of their educational program can provide secondary level credits.**

*The Registered Independent Schools Regulations* state:

“5(1) In this Part, “**registered independent school**” means an independent school that:

- (a) is owned or operated by a corporation:
  - (i) that is incorporated or continued in Saskatchewan; and

- (ii) that has a physical presence in Saskatchewan evidenced by the following:
  - (A) a school administration office located in Saskatchewan;
  - (B) a Saskatchewan postal address; and
  - (C) a Saskatchewan telephone number;
- (b) has a board that:
  - (i) exercises powers similar to those of a board of education; and
  - (ii) comprises a minimum of 3 adults representing 3 separate households;
- (c) subject to subsection (4), for the start of the next academic year, has enrolled at least 7 persons to attend the school:
  - (i) who have attained the age of 6 years but have not yet attained the age of 22 years;
  - (ii) who are from at least 3 separate households; and
  - (iii) the majority of who are enrolled at a grade level higher than kindergarten;
- (d) meets all applicable fire, health and safety standards in relation to its school facilities located in Saskatchewan;
- (e) has goals of education that are, in the opinion of the minister, not inconsistent with the goals of education for Saskatchewan;
- (f) has a name that, in the opinion of the minister:
  - (i) is distinct from the names of other existing educational institutions;
  - (ii) reflects the level of educational programming offered or proposed to be offered by the independent school; and
  - (iii) does not inaccurately reflect the location or geographical area to be served by the independent school;
- (g) is not owned or operated by, or for the benefit of pupils from, an Indian band within the meaning of the *Indian Act* (Canada); and
- (h) did not hold a certificate of registration that was suspended or cancelled within the 24 months preceding the date of application.”

[The Registered Independent Schools Regulations](#) and [The Registered Independent Schools Policy and Procedure Manual](#) provide the framework for independent schools in Saskatchewan. The policy manual is a resource for educators, parents and other interested parties outlining the policy and procedures for the operation of independent schools.

The Ministry of Education, through Independent Schools and Home-based Education, is responsible for the registration, inspection and supervision of independent schools in Saskatchewan. For further information, contact:

Independent Schools and Home-based Education  
Ministry of Education  
409A Park Street  
REGINA, SK S4N 5B2  
Fax: 306-787-2029  
Email: [programsed@gov.sk.ca](mailto:programsed@gov.sk.ca)

## Requirements

Before registration will be granted, there are a number of requirements that independent schools need to meet and continue to satisfy as a condition of ongoing registration. These requirements are outlined in *The Registered Independent Schools Regulations* and are described in more detail in *The Registered Independent Schools Policy and Procedure Manual*.

Requirements for registration include:

- 1) The owner or operator of the school must be incorporated in Saskatchewan. An application should be made to Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan, Corporate Registry, prior to submitting the registration form. An independent school is an institution that is owned or operated by a person that is not a public authority, is not the ministry, nor a public or separate board of education.
- 2) An independent school must have a minimum of three adults from three different households serving as board members.
- 3) An independent school must have a minimum of seven students between the ages of six and 21 from two different households in full time attendance.
- 4) School facilities must meet recognized safety, health and construction standards. School officials are expected to contact local municipal fire prevention and health officials to arrange for inspections. Inspection reports are required to be submitted with the registration package as evidence of compliance.
- 5) An independent school must have goals of education that are not inconsistent with the *Goals of Education for Saskatchewan*. The goals of education must include the school's philosophy of education and purpose, a statement of goals, and address the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for life-long learning. The goals may also include information on the vision or role of the school in the context of the broader community that supports the school.
- 6) The school cannot be owned or operated by, or for the benefit of pupils from, an Indian Band within the meaning of the *Indian Act* (Canada).
- 7) The independent school must have a name that:
  - is different from the name of any existing educational institutions;
  - reflects the level of educational programming offered or proposed to be offered (i.e., elementary, middle or high school); and,
  - does not inaccurately reflect the location or geographical area to be served by the independent school.

Teaching the Saskatchewan curricula is not mandatory for registered independent schools. Registered independent schools are required to provide instruction on a full time basis in the seven required

areas of study. The seven required areas of study include: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies/social sciences, health education, arts education and physical education.

School officials in registered independent schools must notify parents/guardians if the registered independent school is not approved to offer secondary level credits.

Registered independent schools must ensure all teaching staff employed are certified teachers or hold a Letter of Eligibility. Registered independent schools may require teachers with unique training or who share the faith and practice of the parent organization that owns or operates the registered independent school.

All certified teachers, except for Letter of Eligibility holders, must register annually with the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board ([SPTRB](#)). For more information regarding teacher qualifications please contact the SPTRB.

Note: All **Letters of Eligibility** are processed through Independent Schools and Home-based Education, Ministry of Education.

Registered independent schools are required to employ a director and a principal in the school. The registered independent school board may appoint the same person to be both the director and the principal. The registered independent school director is the chief executive officer and is responsible for the general management of the registered independent school, but not necessarily for the oversight of teachers in the educational sense. The registered independent school principal oversees the provision of instruction to students and is required to be a certified teacher.

The registered independent school must agree to annual ministry inspections. The annual inspection involves checking compliance with:

- government regulations;
- eligibility criteria for registration of an independent school; and,
- operational requirements such as the school calendar, the hours of instruction, pupil records storage and secure location, and the instruction provided to students.

An inspection report summarizing the visit is prepared by the ministry official and provided to the school administrator.

The registered independent school must agree to annual reporting requirements. Each registered independent school must complete and submit an annual return package to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education, Ministry of Education, within the stipulated time period. The information gathered includes updates to the school's initial registration and additional information on the current operation of the school.

## Forms and Processes for Registering an Independent School

Groups/individuals interested in starting a registered independent school first meet with the staff in the Independent Schools and Home-based Education to discuss their plans and to arrange for a site visit.

Applications to register should be made well in advance of the proposed admission of students. It is important that all the required information be sent in along with the registration form. Application packages must be submitted to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education Unit by January 31<sup>st</sup> in order to be eligible to begin operating in September of the same year.

In order to register an independent school with the Ministry of Education, groups or individuals must complete the **Independent Schools: Registration of a New School** form and submit the documentation to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education, Ministry of Education.

Information on the registration form includes:

- name of the school;
- year founded or intended start date;
- corporate name that owns and operates the school, and is registered with Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan (ISC), Corporate Registry;
- list of names of board members;
- name of the school director/the chief executive officer of the independent school and the school principal;
- indication if the school intends to enroll visa students;
- any affiliation the school has;
- goals of education; and,
- affirmation that the school facilities meet recognized safety, health and construction standards.

A ministry supervisory official must inspect the school facility at least once prior to issuing a certificate of registration.

If the supervisory official is satisfied that all the criteria have been met, the registration form and a registration certificate will be sent to the Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, for final acceptance. Once registered, the registered independent school must comply with *The Education Act, 1995*, and *The Registered Independent School Regulations* as required.

Schools will not be registered unless they meet the criteria outlined in legislation. If the school no longer meets the registration criteria, the certificate of registration may be suspended or cancelled.

## Categories of Independent Schools

Registered independent schools encompass a diverse range of philosophical and religious beliefs. There are five categories of independent schools in Saskatchewan.

### 1) Registered Independent School

Registered independent schools meet basic eligibility criteria as outlined in *The Registered Independent Schools Regulations*. The registered independent school does not receive any funding from the Ministry of Education. Registered independent schools provide their students of compulsory school age with an exemption from attendance at a public or separate school.

### 2) Alternative Independent Schools

Alternative independent schools typically provide education programs and services to students who are wards of the province. The Ministry of Education is responsible to ensure that the appropriate educational programming is in place. These students may require a wide range of supports and services and his/her family requires an integrated approach amongst human service agencies and ministries.

### 3) Associate Schools

Associate school refers to a registered independent school which has a voluntary operating agreement with a school division. To qualify for associate school status, the school:

- must have been in operation for at least two years; and
- must have an acceptable operating agreement with a school division.

The arrangement involves the school division employing the teachers and the registered independent school board providing the building, maintenance and course materials beyond those associated with the provincial curriculum. Funding is provided through the school division.

### 4) Historical High Schools

Historical high schools were established as “schools of necessity” at a time when public high schools were not always available. Historical high schools are funded because of the long standing historical arrangements that were continued when legislation for independent schools was enacted in 1989. Only historical high schools listed at the time *The Registered Independent Schools Regulations* came into force hold this unique designation. No new schools will be added to the list. Historical high schools are approved to offer secondary credits and have agreed to supervision by ministry staff over and above the requirements for registered schools.

### 5) Qualified Independent Schools

Qualified independent schools are registered independent schools that become eligible to receive provincial funding if they meet specific additional criteria (see *The Registered Independent Schools Regulations*, S. 10(1) for the complete clause). Criteria include:

- operating as an independent school for a minimum of two years;
- employing Professional A teachers;
- implementing Saskatchewan provincial curricula;
- participating in the provincial accountability framework;
- adhering to ministry directives and policies; and,
- financial reporting.

All qualified independent schools are inspected and supervised by ministry staff.

## Independent Schools: Registration of a New School

### Independent Schools Registration (Form A)

Policy		Guidelines	
<p>Registration of an independent school represents a notice of intent to operate. An independent school that meets the eligibility criteria in subsection 5(1) of <i>The Registered Independent Schools Regulations</i> has the right to be registered as an independent school.</p> <p>Registration of an independent school does not, in and of itself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confer eligibility of its students for secondary level credits or secondary level standing; or,</li> <li>• establish the grade, level or year in which its students are entitled to be enrolled in public/separate schools or les écoles fransaskoises.</li> </ul>		<p>This form and all supporting documentation must be received by the Ministry of Education by January 31 in order for the school to be able to begin operations at the beginning of a school year.</p> <p>New independent schools must include the Goals of Education when submitting their intent to register the school.</p> <p>The completed form is submitted to:                      Independent Schools &amp; Home-based Education                      Ministry of Education                      409A Park Street                      REGINA, SK S4N 5B2                      Email: <a href="mailto:programsed@gov.sk.ca">programsed@gov.sk.ca</a></p>	
School Information			
<b>School Name</b>	<b>If the school already exists, year founded.</b>	<b>If the school is new, state the intended starting date.</b>	<b>Do you wish to receive conditional certificate of registration, prior to commencement of operations?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Mailing Address</b>	<b>City/Town</b>	<b>Province/Postal Code</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Street Address (as above or)</b>	<b>City/Town</b>	<b>Province/Postal Code</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Corporate Name of the School Owner</b>		<b>Operating Name of the School</b>	
Grades Taught (check all that apply)			
Kindergarten <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 5 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Grade 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12 <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Students Enrolled (check one)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Co-educational <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input type="checkbox"/> Boys only			
Does the school intend to enrol visa students? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Students residential facilities (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		If yes, for how many students?	
Affiliations			



Independent School Board Information	
Chairperson Name	Email/Phone Number
Other Board Members (attach a list if additional space is needed)	
Independent School Administrative Staff	
Name of Independent School Director	Name of Independent School Principal
Declarations	
<p>We <i>affirm</i> that our school has enrolled or intends to enrol, students between the ages of 6 and 21 from a minimum of three different family units and at least 50 per cent of the enrolled students are of compulsory school age (6 to 16 inclusive).</p> <p>We <i>affirm</i> that our school facilities meet recognized safety, health and construction standards.</p> <p>We <i>affirm</i> that, once registered, our school intends to comply with <i>The Education Act, 1995</i>, and <i>The Registered Independent Schools Regulations</i> as these apply to our school.</p> <p>We understand that a false affirmation represents grounds for denying an initial registration, or for suspending or cancelling a registration at some future date.</p> <p>We <i>affirm</i> that the above information is complete and correct.</p>	
_____	_____
Chairperson	Date
_____	_____
Independent School Director	Date

For Ministry of Education Use Only	
Proceed with application: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Comments:	
_____	_____
Director, Independent Schools & Home-based Education	Date

## Registered Independent Schools: Goals of Education

Policy	Instructions	
<p>Each registered independent school must have goals of education that are not inconsistent with the <i>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</i>.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education will receive the goals of education for an independent school before issuing a certificate of registration. The onus is on the Ministry of Education to demonstrate that the goals of an independent school are inconsistent with the <i>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</i>.</p>	<p>Goals of education may be stated in terms of the independent school itself, or of the broader community that supports the independent school.</p> <p>Attach a statement of your goals of education in accordance with the following format. The preamble and the statement of goals are mandatory, while the vision for the registered independent school is optional.</p>	
Preamble	Statement of Goals	
<p>At a minimum, this should include the school's philosophy of education and the school's purpose, springing from its philosophy of education. This may also include the school's overall philosophy or world view from which the school has derived its particular philosophy of education.</p> <p>This preamble may be written from the perspective of the independent school itself; of the broader community (e.g., the church, denomination or society) that supports the independent school; or of the role of the school in the overall Saskatchewan community.</p>	<p>Goals of education are a more concrete, concise and focused expression of the philosophy and purpose of a school, or of the broader community that supports the school.</p> <p>Since the <i>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</i> embody a student-centered approach to education, which recognizes the inherent worth and potential of each individual student, a school's goals of education should be stated in terms of student outcomes (i.e., in terms of what the students are expected to learn).</p> <p>The goals should address the main aspects of child development – spiritual, ethical, intellectual, emotional and physical – found in the <i>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</i>.</p>	
Vision for the Independent School (optional)	<p>The goals should address the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for life-long learning and for living in society.</p> <p>The goals should be organized into categories, which need not necessarily correspond to the same categories as the <i>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</i>.</p>	
<p>Not only the school, but also the home, the church and the community play a role in the education of children. The school may articulate its vision of its role in education its students in the context of the broader community that supports the school or of the overall Saskatchewan community. This may indicate how the community or the school has defined responsibility for achieving particular goals of education among the home, the church and the community.</p>		
For Ministry of Education Use Only		
Goals of Education:	Received	Not Received
Comments/Reasons:		
Supervisory Official	Date	

## Goals of Education for Saskatchewan

The goals of education recognize the inherent worth and value of each individual. Education, then, should develop the potential of each person to the fullest extent. It should also enhance the ability of each individual to cope effectively in a changing physical, economic and social environment.

### **Basic Skills**

- Read, write and compute.
- Acquire information and meaning through observing, listening, reading, and experiencing.
- Process information through intellectual and technological means.
- Solve problems by applying basic principles and processes of the sciences, arts, and humanities.
- Communicate ideas through written and spoken language, mathematical symbols, and aesthetic expression.

### **Life-Long Learning**

- Seek and value learning experiences.
- Act as self-reliant learners.
- Base actions on the knowledge that it is necessary to learn throughout life.

### **Understanding and Relating to Others**

- Act on the belief that each individual is worthwhile.
- Base actions on the recognition that people differ in their values, behaviours, and lifestyles.
- Interact and feel comfortable with others who are different in race, religion, status or personal attributes.
- Develop a sense of responsibility toward others.

### **Career and Consumer Decisions**

- Develop an awareness of career opportunities.
- Develop interests and abilities in relation to vocational expectations.
- Adapt to shifts in employment patterns and technology.
- Make informed consumer decisions.

### **Membership in Society**

- Assume responsibility for own actions.
- Work with others to achieve individual and group goals.
- Participate in the democratic processes of government and perform the duties of citizenship.

- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Act with honesty, integrity, compassion, and fairness.
- Develop a sense of national pride and acknowledge the need for international understanding.
- Work toward greater social justice.
- Assume responsibility for dependent persons in a manner consistent with their needs.
- Respect law and authority.
- Exercise the right of dissent responsibly.

### **Self-Concept Development**

- Perceive themselves in a positive way
- Appreciate own abilities and limitations.
- Set and work toward personal goals.
- Assess praise and criticism realistically.
- Present themselves with confidence.

### **Positive Lifestyles**

- Practice appropriate personal hygiene, engage in sufficient physical activity and maintain a nutritionally balanced diet.
- Avoid harmful use of alcohol and other drugs.
- Cultivate interests that may be the basis for personal development and leisure pursuits.
- Recognize the importance of productive activity.
- Display initiative and pursue tasks diligently.
- Maintain a safe and healthful community.
- Respect and seek to enhance the environment.
- Appreciate beauty in its many natural and constructed forms.
- Express themselves creatively.

### **Spiritual Development**

- Seek an understanding of the purpose and worth of human existence.
- Develop a knowledge of God.
- Respect family, religion, and culture in a pluralistic society.

### **Growing with Change**

- Work toward immediate and long-term goals.
- Base actions on an understanding that change is a natural process in society.
- Select workable alternatives in response to changing conditions.
- Develop confidence in making decisions that involve risk.

## Registered Independent School Registration Checklist

- Have I contacted the Ministry of Education to set up an initial meeting prior to filling out any registrations forms?
- Have I mailed the independent school corporation papers to Corporate Registry, Information Services Corporation?
- Have I contacted the local fire inspector for a fire safety inspection?
- Have I contacted the local health inspector for a health inspection?
- Have I contacted the municipal authorities to ensure local guidelines and zoning are being followed?
- Does our school name reflect the educational programming that we intend to offer?
- Have I provided the name and contact information of the school's director and school principal?
- Have I contacted the Independent Schools and Home-based Education for an inspection prior to opening?
- Have I submitted the new independent school's registration form and goals of education to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education for approval?
- Have I submitted the names of the individuals on the independent school's board?
- Have I submitted the hours of instruction and the independent school calendar to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education for approval?
- Have I submitted the course outlines for all intended grades offered?
- Have I made arrangements for the secure storage of pupil records?
- Have I determined the employment criteria for teachers?
- Have I submitted the applications for Letters of Eligibility for teacher employment to the Independent Schools and Home-based Education for approval and certification?
- Have I developed a local school administration handbook for teaching staff?
- Have I developed a local parent-student handbook for families?