



Education Unlimited Academy (EUA)

Education Plan (2023-2026)

Board Approved Effective Date

May 17, 2024

Accountability Statement for the Education Plan

The Education Plan for Education Unlimited Academy commencing September 1, 2024, was prepared under the direction of the Board of Directors in accordance with its responsibilities under the *Private Schools Regulation* and the *Education Grants Regulation*. This plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used its performance results to develop the plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the plan to improve student learning and results.

Board Chair signature:



Preamble

Education Unlimited (EU) was originally founded in 1999 as a traditional home education provider, working on behalf of a private school to assist families throughout the province of Alberta. For many years, EU successfully facilitated only traditional home education programs without using provincial accreditation or blended programs, and consistently demonstrated principled leadership in home education.

EU's purpose has always been to recognize the authority and responsibility of parents, and to enable, equip, and encourage them in the training of their children at home.

In 2022, EU was reorganized as Education Unlimited Academy (EUA), an independent, accredited-funded private school. Like the original Education Unlimited, Education Unlimited Academy has one purpose: to support and encourage parents who choose to educate their children at home. EUA offers parents choice and control in the freest possible educational environment. It is a place where true unschooling is understood and celebrated.

In short, the only reason for the existence of EUA is to empower parents to exercise their responsibility for the education of their children.

EUA enables parents to home educate by helping them to understand the requirements of provincial regulations and their own rights as home educators, while at the same time greatly simplifying the required paperwork for registration and funding.

EUA equips parents by providing them with the knowledge and tools necessary to lead their children to responsible adulthood.

EUA encourages parental authority in home education by promoting the foundational principles for educating children within the family created by God, and by reminding parents that these principles do not change with time.

EUA believes in keeping things simple, thereby freeing parents to be the teachers they are.

Stakeholder Engagement

EUA's primary method of stakeholder engagement is through the twice-yearly facilitator visits. When facilitators visit with their families, they get feedback about their students' educational progress, as well as feedback about the services provided by EUA.

Facilitators phone their families mid-year to get additional feedback, and parents occasionally phone facilitators to discuss issues or get questions answered. In short, the facilitators engage directly with their families at least three times per school year so there is ongoing feedback throughout the year. This personal contact with every family is superior to surveys because there is a direct connection.

EUA also conducts an annual survey of parent and staff satisfaction.

Among EUA's various facilitators there are many decades of first-hand, face-to-face conversations with home educators which inform the Education Plan. That is, the Education Plan is built upon feedback from the day-to-day home educating experiences of hundreds of families across the province over a period of many years. This type of valuable feedback — derived from personal conversations — cannot be

conveyed in numbers, charts or graphs, but is reflected in the collective wisdom of EUA's facilitators.

EUA also sends families an email approximately every 2 weeks to keep them updated on developments and to recommend resources. Families can email EUA whenever necessary as well. So, the channels of engagement are ongoing, including through our interactive website.

EUA's facilitators, as stakeholders themselves, also provide important feedback on the school and its efforts. They are kept up to date on the school's activities through regular Professional Development meetings via Zoom, and are encouraged to contribute their views on making improvements. Facilitators also contact the school administration with suggestions between meetings.

Similarly, the Board has monthly meetings where updates about the school's efforts and finances are presented and decisions on school operations are made.

Assurance Framework

Alberta Education has developed an Assurance Framework in order to encourage confidence in the education system by demonstrating that students are successfully being educated. Parents and other Albertans want to know students' needs are being met. By looking at results, school authorities can focus on continuous improvement by making changes in areas that may be lacking.

Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs) contribute to transparency by demonstrating accountability and providing assurance to parents that they have chosen the best school for their children.

The main outcome EUA aims to achieve is parental satisfaction in the education of their children. EUA provides parents with a legitimate framework within which they can educate their children, as well as other services mentioned in this Education Plan. This whole endeavour is about children learning at home, and parents can observe their

children's learning and growth on a day-to-day basis.

Parents want what is best for their children. A good education will clearly help any child to achieve success in life. Because parents are best placed to judge the educational progress of their children in a home education setting, parents' satisfaction is the key outcome for EUA.

If parents are pleased with the results of this educational pathway, they will continue with it and perhaps recommend it to others. If they are not pleased, they will choose another home education option or put their children into a school. This means the outcome (parental satisfaction) can be measured by the number of families that remain with EUA or leave it for another option.

Alberta has more educational options than any other province. Every family has plenty of educational settings to choose from and can easily switch from one to another before the beginning of each school year. Therefore, if the number of families/students registered with EUA declines, the school will need to reassess its operations and determine necessary improvements. On the other hand, if the number of families/students remains the same or increases, EUA is on the right track.

Alberta Education has identified Five Assurance Domains to categorize school planning and reporting: Student Growth and Achievement, Teaching and Learning, Learning Supports, Governance, and Local and Societal Context.

Student Growth and Achievement

EUA promotes Student Growth and Achievement through home education.

Home education is best defined as a parent-directed program delivered outside of a structured learning environment such as a school. Beyond this simple definition, home education can be whatever a parent wants for their child. This flexibility is one of the main reasons families choose to home educate.

In home education, parents have complete control over what their child learns and can spend as much time as they would like focusing on each area of study. A child can spend more time learning about a subject they are passionate about and learn more than they could in a more traditional, structured environment. As well, the focused, one-on-one attention of a parent can help a student work through subjects and concepts they may find more challenging.

The safe, stable environment of the home provides a learning experience free from bullying and negative influences, allowing all students to flourish. Direct control over a child's education allows parents to teach their child in accordance with their beliefs and values, and to provide gifted and special needs students with a program best suited to their abilities.

EUA also offers Grade 8 Science and Mathematics in a Shared Responsibility program following Alberta programming requirements. These program offerings are made available especially as preparation for the trades.

EUA's priority over the next 3 years is to convince as many parents as possible to choose home education. Since home education allows for individualized, one-on-one education within the loving, secure environment of the home, increasing the number of children who have this opportunity will clearly benefit children and their families.

The success of this priority will be measured by tracking the increase or decrease in numbers of children enrolled in home education with EUA.

Teaching and Leading

EUA promotes Teaching and Leading by equipping and encouraging parents to take responsibility for their children's education. Over the years, EUA has amassed a wealth of online materials to equip parents in the education of their children. EUA's YouTube channel contains over four hundred videos, most of which are designed to help parents understand their role in home educating and unschooling.

YouTube helpfully calculates the number of views of EUA's videos. From this number it is easy to determine how frequently parents are using the channel to learn more about encouraging their children's learning at home.

The EUA website also contains text resources including a complete "Home Education Guide" to assist parents along every step of their home education journey. There is also a webpage for Post-Secondary Admissions to explain to parents and students how home educators can successfully engage with post-secondary institutions. Other online parent resources are also available, and EUA's facilitators are tasked with encouraging parents in their home education responsibilities.

Shared Responsibility Programming

EUA offers a Shared Responsibility program that provides 20% Teacher Directed learning. This is done in virtual Zoom format. It is comprised of two courses: Math and Science. The goal of this program is to assure students are qualified to meet requirements for trade apprenticeship entrance. The school will also be looking into implementing the Knowledge and Employability (K&E) program in the 24/25 school year as part of the overall objective of ascertaining student readiness for trades and employment.

Learning Supports

EUA helps parents to acquire the best Learning Supports for their children in three different ways:

Firstly, EUA staff are familiar with a broad range of materials (curricula and other supports) that can be recommended to families looking for assistance.

Secondly, EUA has a comprehensive database of resources on its website, which again includes both curricular and support resources.

Finally, EUA has started and is funding an internal department which organizes and offers a wide variety of learning activities throughout the province. These activities, events, field trips and extracurricular classes are being made available to all home educating parents.

Governance

As a brand new private school, EUA is on a Governance learning curve since people are filling new roles in the operation of the school. As board members and other school leaders grow in their roles and gain experience, the regular day-to-day governance of the school will become more familiar and routine. Furthermore, EUA has created a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), made up of people with specialized knowledge who attend all EUN Board meetings to remain current of affairs and advise when appropriate as well as training for potential promotion to the Board of Directors.

Local and Societal Context

For many years Alberta has had a large and diverse home education community. For over two decades, Education Unlimited has been well-known and respected within this community. Now, as a private school, EUA can play an even larger role. Home education itself has grown in popularity and acceptability throughout the province, and EUA can continue to grow as a flagship example of a new way of providing education to students. In this way, EUA will demonstrate educational leadership, not only within the home education community, but also to the greater provincial education system.

Plan for Implementation

Education Unlimited has existed as an organization since 1999. With over 25 years of experience in Alberta's educational environment, and having a staff with centuries of cumulative experience serving families and students, EUA plans to move forward utilizing its time-tested methods of encouraging and equipping parents in the education of their children.

This means that as a school, EUA can continue on its well-worn path of success rather than starting from scratch. Implementation largely involves the continuation of current operations.

Nevertheless, now that EUA is a full-fledged school, over the next 3-5 years EUA will focus on building on its foundation and developing new administrative structures to carry it into the future. Already in progress is a new program called Activities Unlimited, which has been implemented and staffed to offer families special learning events in conjunction with other home educators.

The main outcome sought by EUA is families that are satisfied with the educational growth of their children. Families that are fulfilled in this way will return the following school year and tell others about their happy experience. This means new families will enrol.

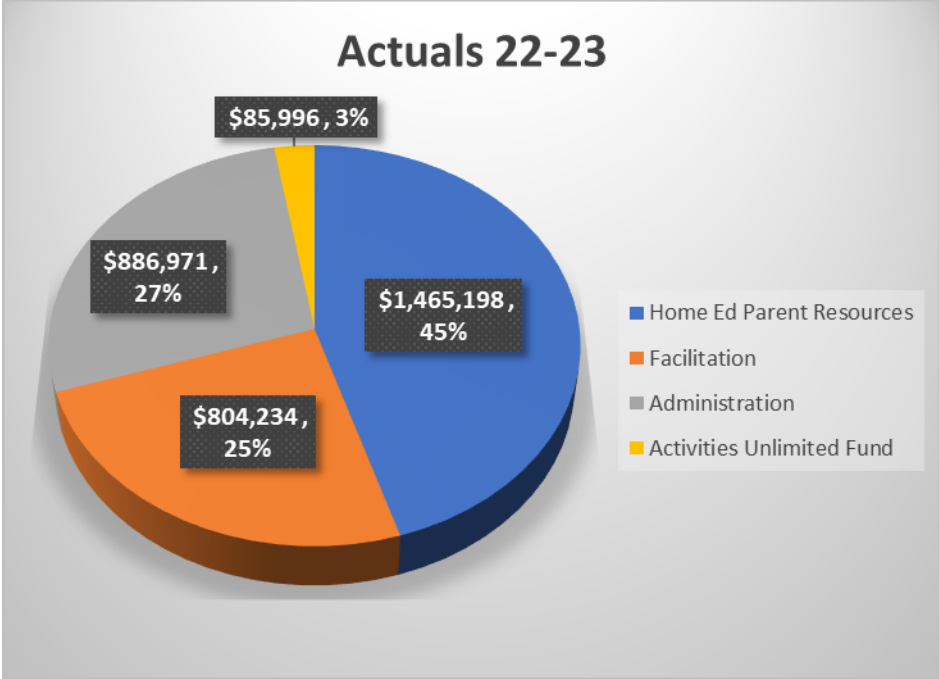
Thus, the key performance measure is the number of students registered with EUA. An increase in students year after year will clearly demonstrate that the educational services being offered by EUA are meeting the needs of Alberta families. Meeting their needs is the benchmark of success.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Student Success

EUA supports improving educational outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. As EUA provides families direct, personalized, one-on-one support, it is in an excellent position to help First Nations, Métis and Inuit families achieve success in home education.

Budget and Future Planning

EUA revenues in their entirety come from Alberta Education Grants. The 2022/23 school year grants total \$3,297,941 for our 1883 students with the following distribution of expenses:



Most noteworthy in our budget planning is that nearly half the grant dollars received from Alberta Education go back to the families to fund students' educational resources and services. Certificated teacher/facilitators who directly support student learning take up an additional 25% which means the majority of planned expenses are student centric while administrative overhead is modest.

EUA plans for continual growth in the range of 10 – 20% with 2023/24 showing a 19% increase in students. This was an anomalous year due to the introduction of the Home Education for Kindergarten program by Alberta Education. Kindergarten students accounted for half of EUA's increase.

EUA operates with a robust and conservative fiscal philosophy. Our expenses are tightly coupled to the number of students funded by Alberta Education to ensure we can manage changes from year to year and provide a consistent experience for our students and families.

As we complete our 25th year of operation, we are committed to maintaining our time-proven fiscal approach. We believe this is an integral part of our formula for fulfilling our mission of supporting Alberta parents as they exercise their educational rights and responsibilities.