

Introduction

The global pandemic caused many dramatic changes in education. In Prairie Spirit School Division, the pandemic presented an opportunity to explore and expand student learning. The creation and development of the Learning@Home program was a response to the pandemic and a new way to support student learning.

Because of the uncertainties caused by the pandemic, many families in Prairie Spirit chose to keep their children home and enrolled in a home-based education program. As a support and an alternative for these families, Prairie Spirit created the Learning@Home program.

Innovative nature of the program or project

[Learning@Home](#) is a Prairie Spirit learning program designed for families with students in Kindergarten through Grade 7 who have chosen to learn from home. This is a unique and innovative approach to provide structure around learning at home.

Learning@Home recognizes and support parental choice in their child's education. This programming is supportive of students who cannot attend school in person due to medical and mental health issues.

With Learning@Home, a dedicated Prairie Spirit teacher plans and assesses student learning for students at home, with parents providing supervision. This program follows and supports the full Saskatchewan curriculum and is responsive to the individual needs of each student.

Students connect twice a month with the teacher for guidance, and their work is self-paced and managed by individual family schedules. Although this program does not require technology, it may be helpful to have some access to the internet.

Benefits of the Learning@Home program

- An accredited teacher provides dedicated support, assessment and learning materials for students learning at home.
- Students learn at their own pace.
- Students who cannot attend school regularly in person can learn in a supportive environment.
- Families receive support to purchase resources for learning at home.

Learning@Home	
Curriculum Offered	Kindergarten to Grade 7
Delivery	Hardcopy or Print from home using internet access
Minimum "side-by-side" student-teacher conversations	Bi-monthly via telephone or video conference
Daily class video conferencing	No
Parent facilitation, supervision and support	Required
Required technology	Telephone or video conferencing device
Submission of student work	Monthly
Report cards per school year	3

Learning@Home is part of Prairie Spirit's newly expanded online school called [Spirit eLearning School](#) - Virtual Classroom. This is another option available to families who choose to learn from home. Spirit eLearning School - Virtual Classroom offers high quality, supportive online education for students in Grade 1 - Grade 12.

Students work independently and are not expected to be online throughout the entire school day. Parents provide supervision and support, as needed.

Benefits of Spirit eLearning School - Virtual Classroom

- Dedicated teachers follow the Saskatchewan Curriculum Guide to plan and create lessons from Grade 1 to Grade 12.
- Curricular content is delivered in a meaningful, engaging and relevant way.
- A wide selection of courses is available for high school students to receive credits required for graduation.
- A broad range of instruction for students in Grade 1 through Grade 12 provides opportunities to meet the outcomes in the curriculum, create routine, and allow for learning and engagement.

Evidence of direct Board influence and participation in the innovation

The Prairie Spirit Board of Education is committed to supporting students and families through the challenges presented during the pandemic and beyond. The Board strongly supported the creation of a comprehensive online school – Spirit eLearning School – as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Learning@Home program is part of this online school.

Board support was reflected in the budget plan which includes full staffing for this newly expanded school. The Board supported the creation of the Learning@Home program as an option for those families who chose to keep their children home to learn. The Board supports Learning@Home and Spirit eLearning School as strategies to ensure all students can access a quality education, regardless of location.

Board of Education Trustees visited the Learning@Home program virtually last fall to see how students are supported by a dedicated teacher while learning at home.

Sustainability of the innovation within the present system or school

Learning@Home is staffed through Spirit eLearning School. Within this structure, the program is well supported.

Enrolment in this program will be monitored to ensure it is meeting the needs of our students and families. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Client support for the innovation

Recently, the teachers at Spirit eLearning School connected with parents at the start of the new school year. It was an opportunity for teachers and parents to begin their important partnership for the 2022/23 school year. In those connections, the staff of Learning@Home were informed of common themes of appreciation for this innovative programming:

- Students who cannot attend traditional school are able to continue their education.
- Students and parents value the flexibility and choice that comes from the Learning@Home program.

The following comments were provided by parents whose children were in Learning@Home (note: student name replaced with []):

- The Learning@Home program was an incredible program for [] as they were going through some tough mental health struggles. They were unable to attend school in person due to their struggles, so this program was invaluable to our family. [] was able to take classes and stay caught up in a safe environment at home.

[] felt like they connected very well with you, and felt supported from both an educational and emotional standpoint. You were very understanding and supportive, listening and adapting the work load to []'s individual needs.

The Learning@Home program was instrumental in helping our family through a tough time while maintaining []'s educational needs. Thank you for everything!

- The Learning@Home program was a great deal of help for our family. We both work in Health Care, with shift work and the Pandemic during the past couple of years, it has been stressful enough. The program assisted us in keeping our child safe while allowing us the freedom to work at our own pace and set our schedules.

Many options and resources were available, as well as how much online versus paper we wanted to manage. It helped to develop scholastically; not only with traditional in class studies, but allowed for exploration and incorporation of real world learning. For example; we were able to take a trip to Drumheller to explore rocks, soil and fossils. Our child was able to correlate the science learnt in the program while on our hike and what wasn't taught in the program inspired the enthusiasm for more learning/knowledge.

We also had access to a teacher to assist when we needed guidance or clarification. The program is a much needed alternative to the in classroom learning for situations similar to ours or for different learning types and situations. It promotes healthy learning and self confidence with more independent learner led goals. It fills a gap because without it, young learners and their families could find themselves without an option for education. Those set backs could affect not only brain development but ones mental health and that of the whole family. We 100% support the program and wish it continued success.

- The Learning@Home program gave my child an opportunity to continue learning in an environment that was positive when the classroom wasn't. It allowed my child to continue to grow in their education and come back to the group setting of a classroom when they were ready. The contact with the teacher was individualized to what my child needed in the moment and my child thrived in that setting. I am grateful this program existed when we needed it most.

Partnerships in support of the innovation

Learning@Home is an integrated part of Spirit eLearning School, Prairie Spirit's online school. This is a strong structure for this programming which supports parental choice in their child's education.

Evidence of improved student achievement

- Even though Learning@Home is in its infancy, there are successes that we are proud of. One example is of a student who was experiencing significant barriers to attending a traditional

school. Ms. Hoang, a Learning@Home teacher, fostered authentic relationships with this student and the family.

We are now happy to report that the student is highly engaged in learning and the family feels supported by our school. Originally, they were in Learning@Home because of a barrier with technology as well, but with partnerships, this student has now started in our virtual classroom program.

- A grade 4 student (struggling reader) demonstrated 1.5 years of growth in reading levels last year.
- All grade 3 students in the Learning@Home program were reading at or above grade level by the end of the year.
- Many students felt supported to return to in-person or virtual learning (addressing various needs while in L@H like mental health, literacy goals). Through our transition meetings, we worked with parents and schools to support the best needs of each student which often included a return to in person or virtual learning.

Supporting resources:

- [Learning@Home: K - 7](#)
- [Prairie Spirit Strategic Plan](#)
- [Prairie Spirit Annual Report – 2020/21 \(includes ESSP results\)](#)
- [My Prairie Spirit Classroom document; graphic](#)

The graphic is a dark blue square with a yellow L-shaped border on the top and left sides, and a grey L-shaped border on the right and bottom sides. The text is white and centered within the square.

Learning@Home

Learning@Home is an innovative approach to learning from home for Prairie Spirit students in Kindergarten to Grade 7.

With **Learning@Home**, student learning is planned and assessed by a Prairie Spirit teacher, with supervision from a parent.

This provides a supportive structure for families who choose to have their children learn at home.



Families receive a \$1,000 grant per child to purchase resources and supplies (\$500 per Kindergarten student). Technology is helpful, but not required.

For more information, call: 306-683-2800
or email: contact@spiritsd.ca

The logo features a stylized white bird or wing shape to the left of the text "PRAIRIE SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION" in white, uppercase letters.

The following graphic provides an overview of the learning options available to Prairie Spirit students:

Learning Options in Prairie Spirit School Division

 Local School K - 12	 Spirit eLearning 1 - 12	 Learning@Home K - 7	 Home-Based K - 12
<p>Occurs in a Prairie Spirit school</p> <p>Planned, directed and assessed by teacher</p> <p>All materials are provided</p> <p>School responsible for technology</p> <p>Eligible for Grade 12 graduation from Ministry</p>	<p>Occurs in the home</p> <p>Planned, directed and assessed by teacher</p> <p>All materials are provided</p> <p>Family supplies required technology</p> <p>Eligible for Grade 12 graduation from Ministry</p>	<p>Occurs in the home</p> <p>Planned & assessed by teacher, supervised by parent</p> <p>Families receive grant to purchase materials</p> <p>No access to technology required, but helpful</p> <p>Transition to other option for Grade 8</p>	<p>Occurs in the home</p> <p>Planned, directed and assessed by parent</p> <p>Families receive grant to purchase materials</p> <p>Technology needs determined by family</p> <p>Not eligible for Grade 12 graduation from Ministry</p>
<p>For more information, contact your local school and talk to the Principal</p>	<p>For more information, contact Spirit eLearning 306-683-2809</p>	<p>For more information, contact Ashleigh Hoang 306-683-2925</p>	<p>For more information, contact Lorraine Fitzgerald 306-683-2830</p>



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