

WHITEFISH FIRST NATION # 459

POLICY TITLE: POST SECONDARY STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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DEFINITIONS: The terms used in this document are defined as follows:

Academic Year:	As defined by the institution, but will not be less than 8 months in duration.
Band Member:	A person whose name is on the Band's membership list.
Foreign Institution:	Any educational institution outside of Canada and will not be approved for student support, unless the program is not available in Canada.
Full Time Student:	Defined by the institution, but in no case will a full time student take less than three courses per semester.
Part Time Student:	Will not be eligible for sponsorship.

Revised Policy
Date: July 9, 2020
Approved by:

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INTRODUCTION:

The Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program provides nominal financial assistance to eligible First Nation members to assist them in financing their Post-Secondary education. This document outlines the various criteria, incentives, types and levels of allowance, and the maximum duration of assistance that may be provided to members of the Whitefish Lake First Nation #459 for various levels of post-secondary education.

This policy applies to all post-secondary students, except those who are sponsored under the First Nation's ISETP Training policy. This program does not apply to First Nation members who are not accepted for membership under the First Nation's own membership code. These student's will be referred to other sources of funding for assistance.

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program is to support members of the First Nation to gain access to post-secondary education via funding, to graduate with the qualifications and skills needed to pursue individual careers, and to contribute to the achievement of individual self-determination and economic self-reliance.

ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible to receive assistance under this program, an applicant must:

1. Be accepted as a First Nation member according to the membership code;
2. Meet university or college entrance requirements;
3. Be enrolled in, or accepted for enrolment in, a program of studies at an accredited Post-secondary institution. Out of province programs are not eligible if the same Program is offered in the student's province.

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PRIORITIES:

Qualified applicants for the Student Assistance Program will be assigned a funding priority number, according to the following criteria:

Priority 1:

Continuing Students - students continuing their studies from the previous to the current academic year, without a break.

Priority 2:

Grade 12 Graduates - students who have successfully completed their high school education and have been accepted into an accredited and approved post-secondary institution.

Priority 3:

Deferred Students - those whose applications for assistance were deferred due to lack of funds in the previous school year, and who are reapplying for support.

Priority 4:

Mature Students - those accepted in certificate, diploma, or degree programs under the category of "mature" students.

Priority 5:

UCEP Program Students - students who need to complete prerequisites to pursue post-secondary education, and who will attend preparation programs, to a maximum of one academic year. (University Studies)

Priority 6:

Previous Withdrawals - students who have sporadically attended post-secondary institutions over a number of years, or who have not yet used the maximum time in the program and are in good standings with the nation education funding.

- **PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING**

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SUPPORT:

Assistance will be provided for three levels of post-secondary education:

- Level 1:** Community college and Certificate/Diploma Programs – Max of 2 years
- Level 2:** Undergraduate programs – Max of 4 academic years, Bachelor Degree
- Level 3:** Masters Program-. 2 academic years; Doctoral Program: 1 academic year.
Professional degree programs, e.g. Law, Medicine, - 3 academic years

An ACADEMIC YEAR is as defined by the post-secondary institution, but will not be less than eight months in duration. **This program does not fund upgrading.** Students must have a Grade 12 Certificate or Diploma to qualify. **Once a student completes a program they must wait 2 years to reapply.** Members wishing to elevate there level of education to a masters or doctorate will qualify for tuition only: especially if applicant is currently employed.

TERMITATION:

Any payment to any student may be suspended if:

1. Notice is received of a student withdrawing or dropping out of a program of study.
2. A student's status changes from full time to part time.
3. **A student fails to obtain the minimum credits required by his/her chosen program of studies in the academic semester.** A student must send in their marks after each semester.

If, for any reason except verified medical documentation, a student is terminated by the institution he/she will not be eligible for program funding for at least two academic years following the termination.

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APPLICATIONS:

All applicants must file their applications by **May 15** of any year for consideration for a September start. All students must complete the First Nation's Application for Educational Assistance form, and be accepted by a recognized and approved post-secondary institution before they are can receive financial assistance. **Acceptance by an institution must be verified** by a letter of acceptance from the institution. Assistance will be provided to continuing students who submit a completed application, letter of acceptance, and an official transcript, at the end of each academic year.

The Education Director will calculate the amount of financial assistance to be provided to each student, and will inform applicants as soon as possible regarding the status of their application, and if approved. The Director will make sure the applicant has not received funding for the past two years and will submit applications to a selection committee for selections. Selections will be done by a selection committee no later than the first week of June.

If selected sponsorship letters will be sent to the University or College no later than June 30 of each year.

SUPPORT FOR FULL TIME STUDENTS:

Tuition Fees/Book Fees/ Registration Fees

When tuition fees are approved, the Education Director will proceed as follows:

1. Tuition fees will be paid directly to the educational institute upon receipt of invoice.
2. Registration fees paid by the student will be reimbursed if selected for funding.
3. Private schools are not funded according to funding guidelines.
4. Books and mandatory class supplies will be paid when invoice is received from the educational institute or reimbursed to student when proof of payment is received.
5. The first allowance payment will include \$200.00 for supplies e.g.; binders, paper notebooks. This will also be distributed in Jan for the second semester.

Support for books and supplies will cover the textbooks listed by the institution as required for the students program of studies, and other mandatory supplies required by the student. Health and Dental are not covered and it is up to the student to opt out of this additional fee. Release of information forms must be signed and sent to Director before funding is granted.

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Examination fees:

When special examinations are required to enter a particular profession, such as Chartered Accountancy, or Nursing, the Education Department will provide funding for the payment of examination fees.

Travel:

Students who are required to live away from their permanent place of residence while they attend school will qualify for a travel, twice a year. This is only if the student is required to attend class room studies and frequent lab. Students with online studies not be considered. Travel support will be equal to the cost of return transportation from the student's permanent place of residence to the nearest Canadian post-secondary institution which offers the program of studies in which the student is enrolled. Travel will be arranged by the most economical means, for example, bus transportation or gas support.

Practicum travel when necessary, is to be arranged by the student with assistance from the Education Director, and will also use the most economical form of travel.

Daily travel allowances to travel from the student's residence to the school are not provided. Daily travel is a part of the student's allowance.

LIVING EXPENSE:

Support for living expenses, is provided to cover such costs as food, shelter, daily transportation, day care, rental costs, and contingency funding.

Allowances to assist students fund their living expenses will be provided at rates approved and calculated by administration.

All students who will be residing away from home while attending school are eligible for an allowance each month that will include shelter. A one-time damage deposit amount can be arranged with the Director. Since these deposits are all refundable to the student, Damage deposit will be deducted evenly from the monthly allowance payments unless arrangements are made to have the refund returned directly from the landlord to the education department. The allowance is deposited into the students account no later than 3 banking days before the end of each month. The payments are distributed a month ahead for e.g. (for September start the payment will be deposited three banking days before the end of Aug) Students doing online courses that live on the reserve will not be eligible to the shelter portion of the allowance.

Students who are on any type of leave with pay from their place of employment will not qualify for assistance with living expenses, unless the employer's portion is less than the allowance they would receive if they were not on educational leave. In this case, the employer's portion may be supplemented to the level of assistance the student would eligible to receive.

Students are encouraged to get a part time job if they want to subsidize their monthly income.

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Additional support is not provided for regular clothing, students are expected to purchase these from their monthly living allowances. However, some courses and institutions require special uniforms or safety equipment or tools. Additional assistance for these items are provided, if it is verified as needed by the institution.

Some courses require the student to have special equipment. The Education program does not purchase any special equipment for student use. However, funds can be provided for students to rent equipment for short periods of time. For this type of assistance to be approved, there must be verification from the institution that the student requires this equipment to continue his studies, and the equipment must be directly related to the course the student is taking. There are no allowances provided for the rental of typewriter, word processors, nor for computers, for general use.

To receive continuing assistance, students must provide evidence of satisfactory progress in their program of studies, usually an official copy of their transcript

SUPPORT FOR UCEP PROGRAM STUDENTS:

University and College Entrance Preparation Programs (UCEPP) are offered by Canadian Universities and community colleges to enable students to attain the academic levels required for entrance into degree and diploma credit programs. It is not an upgrading program, since students who enter UCEP Programs will already have a grade 12 Certificate or Diploma. This section provides the terms and conditions under which financial support can be provided. Student eligibility for support is contingent upon the following conditions:

The applicant is a First Nation member according to the First Nation's membership code, and has been accepted for enrolment in a Canadian post-secondary institution's UCEP program.

The applicant must be at least 19 years old, as of September 1 in the year of application.

The applicant must provide a letter from the post-secondary institution offering the UCEP program stating that;

- The student can attain the academic level for university or college entrance within the period of one academic year;
- The student will be accepted at a regular university or college credit program, upon successful completion of the UCEP program.
- The applicant must not have been previously financed by the First Nation for post-secondary programs. Exemptions to this condition may be made for medical reasons.

The above eligibility requirements apply to students registering for UCEP programs.

All students must provide the First Nations Education Director with a progress report from the institution, confirming successful completion of the year, and showing that they have obtained the prerequisites for entry into a diploma or credit program to be considered a continuing student.