



**NIPISSING FIRST NATION**

**Post Secondary Education Assistance Program**

**Policy and Administration Guidelines**

**Original Revision date:**      **Education Committee Minutes February 5, 1996.**  
   **Adoption of Council Minutes March 5, 1998.**  
   **Accepted by Council this 5<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2006.**  
   **Accepted by Council this 19<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2011**  
   **Amended and approved by Council this 21<sup>st</sup> day of June, 2011**

**NIPISSING FIRST NATION**

**POST SECONDARY EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES**

---

**A. PURPOSE**

To state the policy of the Band and the related administrative guidelines with respect to the provision of educational assistance to registered Band post secondary students.

<b>B. PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. General Information	Gene 3
2. Student Eligibility for Assistance	Stud 3
3. Secondary Priority List	Post 4
4. Educational Assistance Available from Other Agencies	Educ 6
5. Individual Assistance Limits and Conditions	Indiv 6
6. Categories and Levels of Assistance	Cate 8
7. Elementary Funding Request for Special Events	Supp 12
8. Graduation Awards for Post Secondary Students	Grad 13
9. Procedures for Application and Provision of Educational Assistance	Proc 13

<b>10.</b>	<b>ent Appeals</b>	<b>Stud 15</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>seling Services</b>	<b>Coun 15</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>ral Functions of the Education Department</b>	<b>Gene 16</b>

## **1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

- 1.1 The Post Secondary Education Assistance program is designed to encourage registered band members to acquire university, college, and professional qualifications so that they can become economically self-sufficient and may realize their individual potentials for contributions to their community and other communities. The program provides support and a financial subsidy to registered band members who are qualified and/or have been accepted by accredited provincially funded college, university, or private institutions as approved by the Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities, into programs or courses which normally require the completion of secondary school as a minimum academic entrance requirement. This includes those persons who are accepted with lesser academic qualifications in recognition of the applicant's maturity and potential for success in their chosen field of study.
- 1.2 To ensure that the maximum possible number of band students are able to achieve their academic and vocational goals through the funds available for this program, fair and reasonable performance standards for students will be established through the co-operation of the institutes of higher learning and the students who participate in the program. Reasonable participation in the program will assist in responsible management of the program.
- 1.3 The Nipissing First Nation Council is responsible for the implementation of the policy and guidelines.
- 1.4 The post secondary funding program is administered by the Nipissing First Nation Education Department.

## **2.0 STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE**

- 2.1 To be eligible to receive assistance under the terms of the Post Secondary Educational Assistant program, it is necessary that:

2.2 The applicant must be a Registered Nipissing First Nation member.

(a) The applicant has attained university or college entrance requirements through successful completion of secondary school studies and has been accepted for registration by a recognized college, university or private institution into a program of studies which has secondary school graduation as a normal prerequisite to registration.

OR

(b) The applicant has not been registered as a full time student in a recognized secondary school for at least one full year prior to application, and has been accepted for registration as a “Mature Student” (21 years of age or over) into a program of studies as listed in (a) above.

2.3 The applicant is aware that funds provided to students through this program are not intended to be sufficient to pay off personal debts.

2.4 “Additional Qualification” courses (e.g. individual with Early Childhood Education diploma requests funding for course that leads to an additional qualification such as “Working with Children with Special Needs”) may be funded through the Part-time post secondary budget, based on funding availability. In such situations documentation will be requested indicating portion that the individual’s Employer is willing to contribute.

2.5 Funding requests for specialized areas of study that may not fall clearly within the policy guidelines will be dealt with on a case by case basis and subject to funding availability. Such as, on-line courses of study, programs offered on-site only every few weeks, or other study arrangements where daily in class sessions are not offered.

2.6 Students can be funded in the College General Arts and Science Program only for a maximum of two semesters with a written recommendation and education plan for the following year from the College.

2.7 Applications must be received no later than May 25<sup>th</sup> annually at 4:00 pm. Should the deadline fall on a weekend, the next business day will be the deadline.

### **3.0 POST SECONDARY PRIORITY LIST**

#### **3.1 PRIORITY ONE**

a) Continuing students who are enrolled in Post Secondary Studies at one institution (in the present school year) with an overall Grade Point Average of Two Point (2.0) or better and are continuing on (following school year in the same program).

- b) Continuing students enrolled in courses of study that require time away from classroom study (e.g. co-op placements, internships etc.) may have funding in place and remain a continuing student. Such students may be entitled to a living allowance for the period of such placements provided they do not receive any remuneration from other sources. Written documentation will be required indicating any financial compensation the student will or will not receive while participating in such a required course of study placement.
- c) Continuing students who have been enrolled in Post Secondary Studies at one institution (in the present school year) with an overall Grade Point Average of Two Point Zero (2.0) or better and are continuing (following school year in same program) **BUT who accessed funding from a source other than the Nipissing First Nation Education Department.**

\*\*\*Please note: Nipissing First Nation will not be responsible for costs incurred by students through OSAP etc.

### 3.2 PRIORITY TWO

- a) Local secondary school students who are graduating in the current school year or who graduated one year prior and are enrolling in Post Secondary Studies for the first time.
- b) Out of town secondary school students who are graduating in the current school year or who graduated one year prior and are enrolling in Post Secondary Studies for the first time.

### 3.3 PRIORITY THREE

- a) Students who have successfully obtained their grade 12 graduation diploma and have been out of school for two or more years but have not attended any post secondary institution. Other funding initiatives should also be explored as they may be more easily accessed or more suitable.
- b) Students who have successfully obtained their grade 12 equivalent or mature student testing certificate but have not attended any post secondary institution. Other funding initiatives should also be explored as they may be more easily accessed or more suitable.

### 3.4 PRIORITY FOUR

Students who earned a Grade Point Average of no less than Two Point Zero (2.0) wishing to return to a post secondary institution to complete a course of study after being out for one or more years.

### 3.5 **PRIORITY FIVE**

Students enrolled in Post Secondary studies in the present school year with a Grade Point Average of Less than Two Point (2.0) but greater than Zero.

### 3.6 **PRIORITY SIX:**

Students who dropped out of Post Secondary studies or had a Grade Point Average of Zero and made no alternate plans with the Nipissing First Nation Education Department.

## 4.0 **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FROM OTHER AGENCIES**

4.1 To avoid duplications of funding, students are to accept any and all educational assistance made unconditionally available to them by other funding agencies to offset a portion or all of the financial assistance required from this program.

4.2 Awards won by a student for outstanding scholarships, in competition with other scholars, are considered as incentive income and do not affect the computation of assistance benefits available to the student.

4.3 **Directed scholarship awards**, those financial awards specifically offered by an institution to an enrolled student for tuition, residence or books must be reported to the Nipissing First Nation Education Department and used by the student for that purpose. The Education Department will not provide 'duplicate' funding (e.g. pay tuition when student has been awarded tuition scholarship at specific institution).

## 5.0 **INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE LIMITS AND CONDITIONS**

### 5.1 **PROBATIONARY STANDING**

A student who is struggling to meet the academic requirements of the program may be placed on probation for one semester. This will occur after discussion and planning with the student and faculty advisor (or other Counselor at the institution) in an effort to implement a 'plan for student success' and avoid having to terminate funding altogether. Attendance records may be requested from the student on a regular basis as a part of this probationary standing.

After one semester on probation a student must be demonstrating academic improvement if funding is to continue. Failure to do so will result in cancelation of continued funding.

## 5.2 HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

**\*\*\*\*\*NOTE:** Health and dental insurance that is NOT part of mandatory fees will NOT be paid by Nipissing First Nation Education Department. All students have access to non-insured benefits through the First Nation/Inuit Health Branch of the federal Ministry of Health. Students may choose to purchase the additional coverage through the post secondary institution, but at their own expense.

Students are responsible to notify the appropriate department at the post secondary institution that they are either #1 declining this coverage, or, #2 are to be billed directly.

Students are advised to read the registration package carefully to determine the **deadline date for withdrawing** from these services to avoid being charged for them. Contact the Registrar's Office if additional information is required.

**Failure to do so will result in the fees becoming the responsibility of the student.**

- 5.3 The funding agency Nipissing First Nation Education Department may terminate Educational Assistance post secondary funding to a student who has demonstrated a lack of ability or willingness to meet the academic or financial management responsibilities, which the student has accepted.
- 5.4 A student who has withdrawn or chosen not to attend school, and has failed to notify the Education Department while continuing to receive Post Secondary funding, will be required to repay the full amount disbursed. The student will not be eligible for any Post Secondary funding until the full amount has been repaid.
- 5.5 If the personal circumstances of the student are such that the student's Post Secondary Counselor at the College or University recommends further consideration, a conditional extension of education assistance benefits can be approved. This must be documented on the student's education file and the student may be placed on probation (section 5.1).
- 5.6 While adhering to all the applicable assistance regulations and conditions set out in this policy, the total assistance provided to an individual student shall not exceed the required "student weeks" as determined by the institution. (see item 5.7 for definition of student week).
- 5.7 The number of student weeks provided will depend on the length of particular courses as determined by the institution. Students may be provided with additional student weeks, depending on institutional requirements or exceptional circumstances. The maximum number of "student weeks" of assistance, which may be provided for each of the five major post secondary education levels is provided below.

- 5.8 Students are required to provide a letter from the program coordinator and/or information from the institution indicating the number of weeks required to complete the program of study.
- 5.9 A “Student Week” is the unit of measure for budgetary and assistance limitations purposes. It is a full week in which a student has received educational assistance, under the terms of this program, to permit full-time attendance at an educational institution.

**A. COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

<b>1 Year Certificate Program</b> e.g. Academic and Career Entrance Program(ACE) Pre-service Health	35 weeks
<b>2 Year Diploma Program</b> e.g. Early Childhood Education	70 weeks
<b>3 Year Diploma Program</b> e.g. Accounting	105 weeks
<b>Trades / Apprenticeship Program</b>	105 weeks

**B. UNIVERSITY**

BACHELOR’S DEGREE	105 Weeks
HONOUR’S DEGREE	35 Weeks *
MASTER’S DEGREE	70 Weeks *
DOCTORATE (Ph.D.)	70 Weeks *

\*Additional student weeks may be provided depending on College or University course requirements. This is to be determined prior to first year approval by documentation from the institution outlining the required timeframes. Most institutions provide students with a program outline that can be submitted to the Education Office upon request.

There may be situations where a student requires one or two additional semesters to complete a program (e.g. when transferring from one institution to another). Funding

may be extended for one or two semesters in such situations, at the discretion of the Director of Education.

## **6.0 CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE**

### **6.1 STUDENT ALLOWANCE**

- a) An allowance is provided to **full time students** who qualify, to assist with daily living expenses such as food, daily travel, rent, hydro, phone, heating etc. It is not intended to cover ALL costs, but rather to assist student with these expenses. NOTE: Some tuition fees include the cost of a bus pass.
- b) The amount of Allowance a student is entitled to is based on whether or not the student has dependents (a child under 18 years of age), whether or not it is necessary for the student to live away from home to attend College or University, and whether or not the student has an employed spouse.
- c) Allowances are not provided for “Part Time” students or those who are eligible for any other source of full time income. However, educational assistance to cover the cost of Tuition and Books shall be made available if not provided by the employer or other agency.
- d) Students attending a post secondary institution outside of Canada will receive allowances paid in Canadian Currency up to the maximum paid for equivalent programs in Canada.
- e) To be funded for full time studies, student must attend one educational institution only.

#### **ALLOWANCES TO BE AS FOLLOWS:**

Student living at Home .....	\$800.00 per Month
As of April 1, 2012 the new rate for a student living at home will be \$1250 per Month	
Student (Married/Common Law with no children).....	\$1,250.00 per month
Student living away from home .....	\$1,250.00 per Month
Student with 1 Child .....	\$1,410.00 per Month
Student with 2 Children.....	\$1,570.00 per Month
Student with 3 Children.....	\$1,730.00 per Month
Student with 4 Children.....	..\$1,890.00 per Month

### **Allowance Notes:**

- Proof of Residency will be determined by rent receipt, Intent to Rent form from landlord or school residence documentation.
- Rates for dependent children: \$160.00 per Month for each child up to a maximum of 4 dependents. Proof of dependency may be requested.
- By definition, a dependent child is one who is under 18 years of age and residing full time with the student.
- Rate for unemployed dependent spouse will be same as dependent child (\$160.00 per month). Record of Employment or income tax documentation required to determine eligibility. Any change in employment status must be reported immediately to Education Office so that the necessary adjustments can be made. Overpayment of such funds must be re-paid to the Education Department prior to future education funding being issued.
- By definition, an unemployed dependent spouse is a non-income earning individual.
- Maximum number of dependents, including unemployed spouse and/or children will be 4.

### **6.2 EMERGENCY TRAVEL**

With prior approval of the Education Department, a student may receive an allowance to cover the costs of emergency travel to the student's home community. Example: Funeral, Act of God.

### **6.3 TUITION ALLOWANCE**

- a) Effective April 1, 2012 Tuition cost shall be paid directly to the institution on behalf of a student enrolling in a Post Secondary education program of studies in an accredited institution of higher learning to a maximum of \$5000 for College Programs, and \$7000 for University Programs. Fees which are not mandatory registration fees will not be paid by Nipissing First Nation. It will be the responsibility of the student to pay such fees themselves or opt out of such fees. Students will be responsible for the tuition amounts which exceed the maximum yearly allocation. Specialized areas of study which may exceed these rates will be reviewed and may be approved, based on availability of funding, by the Director of Education.
- b) For students who wish to attend a private institution or a post secondary institution in the United States, tuition will be paid to the equivalent of a similar program in a

provincially funded institution. Students will be responsible for the tuition amounts which exceed the maximum yearly allocation.

- c) Tuition will be paid only to 'private institutions' in Ontario that are recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
- d) The Education Department will advise the Registrar's Office at the post secondary institution by letter that we will sponsor the student for tuition and other mandatory registration fees (up to the maximum education funding allowable). A copy of the sponsorship letter will be forwarded to the student. The student should contact the Education Office if they do not receive a copy of the sponsorship letter by the start of classes.
- e) Students requesting full time funding for Spring and/or Summer courses must provide written documentation from the institution indicating that this is a required part of their program of studies. Spring & Summer allowance amounts may impact the total student weeks allotted for the funded program (refer to section 5.9 in the policy). Request will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Students can alternatively request for part-time funding for the Spring or Summer semester where full time funding does not apply. (refer to section 9.1 b in the policy)

#### 6.4 BOOK ALLOWANCE

- a) Each Full time student shall be eligible to receive a Book Allowance of \$400 per semester of enrollment, September to April, to assist with the cost of books and supplies. Receipts are not required.
- b) When students are enrolled in **Full time** studies during spring intercession or special summer courses the Book allowance shall be the actual cost of required books indicated by the program or institution, up to a maximum of \$200. **Original receipts must be provided to the Education Department for reimbursement.**
- c) The maximum amount for book allowance for Part Time students shall be \$150 per approved course taken. Only required books are eligible for reimbursement. **Original receipts must be provided to the Education Department for reimbursement purposes.**

#### 6.5 FUNDING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS/LEARNING EXCEPTIONALITIES

- a) Requests for supplementary funding to address specific learning needs will be considered. Students will be required to assume costs for expenses incurred without prior approval by the NFN Education Department. The Education Department will

assist however possible, but the student will be responsible for meeting the following conditions:

- ✓ Student must identify any additional service or special equipment needs on initial funding application, where known;
- ✓ Contact the Special Needs Office at the institution they are attending to determine what resources are needed and available. This could be done initially through the Aboriginal Student Services Office, especially for first year students;
- ✓ Submit copies of testing results and/or other documentation to the NFN Education Office to determine need and what support is required, and to identify any program extensions;
- ✓ Requests must be accompanied by documentation from the receiving institution;
- ✓ All costs must be pre-approved by the Education Department and original receipt must be submitted to the Education Office. They will be kept on the student's confidential file;
- ✓ Approvals are subject to the availability of funds and priority needs;

b) Short Term Tutorial Assistance:

Students experiencing difficulty with classes should first speak with the instructor or faculty advisor about getting extra help. This is often available through the college or university for no additional charge.

Students who require tutorial support where a charge is involved must first discuss this with the Education Department before costs are incurred. Supporting documentation will be required from the Faculty or Program Advisor that the service is necessary and other supports have been explored

## **7.0 SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

Supplementary requests for Special Events could include such activities as conferences/workshops, graduation and cultural events which are specifically related to the student's course of study.

Nipissing First Nation Chief and Council and the Education Department recognize the need to fulfill certain program related requirements and the importance of maintaining the Ojibway Language and Culture.

Requests for special events travel should include:

- ✓ Letter from student outlining the particulars of the trip, workshop etc. to the Education Department;
- ✓ A completed submission that includes the budget (including own funds contributed), description of special event and letter from Instructor supporting student's participation as it relates to course of study.

**All requests should be received by the Education Office at least one month prior to the actual event. Approval is based on the availability of funds. Late submissions will not be considered for funding.**

## **8.0 GRADUATION AWARDS FOR POST SECONDARY STUDENTS**

Post secondary students, upon completion of a program of study, are entitled to a Graduation Award, **one time only** at each particular level of study. The student is required to submit a photocopy of the completed diploma or degree certificate to the Education Department when requesting the award. Eligibility is dependent on submitting required documents no more than 2 years after graduation.

College Diploma	\$300.00
University Bachelor Degree	\$300.00
University Master Degree	\$300.00
University Ph.D. Degree	\$300.00
Trades/Apprenticeship Program (minimum 40 weeks)	\$300.00

## **9.0 PROCEDURES for APPLICATION and PROVISION of EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

### **9.1 APPLICATION PROCESS**

All Nipissing First Nation Members who are interested in receiving:

- a) Full Time Educational Assistance under the terms of this program are to complete and submit a Full Time Post Secondary Application Form to the Education Department by the deadline of May 25<sup>th</sup>. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for completion. A letter will be attached indicating which section(s) are incomplete.

- b) Part Time Educational Assistance under the terms of this program are to complete and submit a Part Time Post Secondary Application Form to the Education Department. All applications are taken on a first come first served basis, within the fiscal year of April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, based on availability of funding.

All Post Secondary Application Forms can be accessed online at nfn.ca or by calling the NFN Education Office.

The Education Department may require proof of the applicant's eligibility as a Registered Nipissing First Nation member (Band Number).

**Residence Applications:** Students planning to live in residence must complete the necessary arrangements with the college or university of their choice themselves; however, it is very important that the Education Office be advised of these arrangements.

Usually deposits are required in the spring to hold space in residence. Arrangements for payment or reimbursements need to be discussed with the Education Office as individual circumstances will determine the best way to proceed.

## 9.2 REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Once all completed applications have been received (May 25th deadline) a review process takes place. Applications will be prioritized, as outlined in section 3 of this document.

**All Priority One:** Continuing Students will be notified by no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>. Letters of approval for continued funding will go out immediately along with a Post Secondary Package. If there is a reason that funding will not be approved, the student will also be notified with an explanation.

**New Student Applications:** Approved applicants requiring additional documentation will receive a preliminary letter of acceptance, along with a Post Secondary Package, advising the additional documentation that is required (e.g. high school transcripts, consents for the release of information and funding agreement form).

Applicants will be notified of Final approval once all the necessary documentation has been submitted. It is important that students return all necessary documentation by the deadline of July 15th.

The Education Department's goal is to fund as many students that meet the requirements as possible based on funding levels from (AANDC) Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

### 9.3 STUDENT BANKING INFORMATION

Once an application is approved, each student must provide banking information to the Education Department, prior to the start of the new school year. Specific dates will be provided as a part of the registration package. This is very important as allowances and book money are provided through electronic banking and this must be set up prior to the start of the school year.

### 9.4 PROVISION of INFORMATION to STUDENTS

Each student shall receive copies of application forms, notices, requests for information, reminders and any other documentation pertaining specifically to the student, which has been prepared by the Education Department at the address provided by the student. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Education Department of any change of residence address, email address or telephone contact information. Failure to do so could result in the student not receiving information important for the continuation of funding.

The Education Department shall regard individual and personal documents as "confidential".

The Education Department shall prepare an information brochure, which outlines the General Terms of this program for distribution to potential participants.

## **10.0 STUDENT APPEALS**

- 10.1 Should any students be convinced that the preceding regulations and guidelines have not been fairly applied to his or her situation the student shall have the right to a review of the decisions made.

The student shall submit an appeal in writing, explaining the concerns and providing whatever information is pertinent to the situation, to the Nipissing First Nation Director of Education. The written appeal will be reviewed by the Director of Education and the NFN Executive Director, at which time all new or additional information will be taken into consideration along with the Post Secondary Policy guidelines. The student will be notified of the final decision within 10 (ten) business days.

The results of this appeal are to be consistent with the Post Secondary Policy and other documentation on file and will be final and binding.

## **11.0 COUNSELLING SERVICES**

Academic and general counseling is available to students enrolled in post secondary institutions. These services will vary from one College or University to another. Students are strongly encouraged to make use of **Aboriginal Student Services** at their institution and to maintain communication with the **Education Department at Nipissing First Nation**. NFN Education Staff work closely with the staff at the Colleges and Universities when students require assistance, whether for personal or academic reasons. Once again, our goal is to support our students in achieving academic success.

## **12.0 GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

- a) Ensuring that potential applicants are aware of the availability of “The Post Secondary Education Assistance Program.”
- b) Discussing with eligible potential applicants, the individual(s) interests and goals with a view to assisting the student to relate these to a realistic academic achievement plan.
- c) Directing the student to resources that can assist them in acquiring as much information as possible about programs of study, consistent with the student’s academic plan, which meet the terms of the Educational Assistance Program.
- d) Assisting, the student, if requested, in the registration process for College or University.
- e) Assisting the student to complete the application for post secondary assistance program. This will include advising the student of all benefits of the assistance program to which the student is entitled.
- f) Maintaining current student files that include copies of the student’s completed application for assistance after final approval has been given, academic records, any other personal documentation and financial records.
- g) Being available to answer questions students and/or parents may have regarding the Post Secondary Education Program generally, and/or providing direction and guidance related to the individual student’s needs.

Approved this 10<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2012.