Gitsegukla Band Council

Post Secondary Policy and Procedures

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Introduction

The Gitsegukla Band Council recognizes that education is a key contributor to individual success, community capacity, and Nation building. The Post-Secondary Education Program exists to support eligible members in pursuing approved post-secondary education and training opportunities leading to meaningful employment, career development, and lifelong learning.

The Post-Secondary Education Program operates in accordance with current Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP) National Program Guidelines while maintaining Gitsegukla Band Council authority over local program administration, funding priorities, and operational procedures.

The Post-Secondary Education Program is subject to available funding and annual budget approvals.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish fair and transparent eligibility requirements;
  - Define sponsorship priorities and funding limitations;
  - Promote student success and accountability;
  - Ensure equitable access to limited funding resources;
  - Provide administrative consistency in sponsorship decisions.

Student Conduct and Communications Expectations

The Post-Secondary Education Program is administered on the principles of mutual respect, professionalism, and accountability.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner when communicating with the Education Department, Education Committee members, Chief and Council, Band administration, educational institutions, and other individuals involved in the administration of this program.

Acceptable communication includes:

- Respectful discussion and disagreement;
  - Requests for clarification;
  - Questions regarding policy or decisions;
  - Appeals submitted through established procedures.

The following conduct is unacceptable:

- Abusive, aggressive, threatening, or intimidating behaviour;
  - Harassment, bullying, or discriminatory comments;
  - Personal attacks directed toward staff, committee members, Council members, or other students;
  - Repeated hostile, disrespectful, or disruptive communications;
  - Attempts to pressure, manipulate, or circumvent established policies, procedures, or funding decisions;
  - Excessive or unreasonable communication that interferes with normal program administration.

Students are expected to communicate concerns through established channels and in a manner that promotes respectful problem-solving.

Where inappropriate conduct occurs, the Education Department may:

- Issue a written warning;
  - Require future communications to be submitted in writing;
  - Restrict communications to scheduled meetings or written correspondence;
  - Suspend consideration of non-emergency requests until respectful communication is restored;
  - Refer serious incidents to Band Administration for further review.

Nothing in this section limits a student's right to ask questions, request clarification, submit complaints, or appeal decisions in accordance with this policy.

Respectful communication is a condition of participation in the Post-Secondary Sponsorship Program.

Eligibility

To be eligible for sponsorship, an applicant must:

- Be a registered member of the Gitsegukla Band;
  - Be accepted into an approved program of studies;
  - Meet all application requirements;
  - Be in good standing with previous sponsorship obligations.

Eligible programs must:

- Be provincially recognized;
  - Be delivered by an accredited institution;
  - Carry academic credit;
  - Lead to a certificate, diploma, degree, apprenticeship certification, or other recognized credential.

The following are not eligible:

- Non-credit courses;
  - Professional development workshops;
  - Personal interest courses;
  - Programs not resulting in a recognized credential.

Student Responsibility

Post-secondary sponsorship is a partnership between the student and the Education Department.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending classes;
  - Meeting academic requirements;

- Monitoring institutional deadlines;
- Managing personal finances;
- Seeking academic support when required;
- Communicating concerns in a timely manner.

The Education Department is not responsible for ensuring institution invoices are sent to the education department; we provide sponsorship letters, if more paperwork is needed it is the student's responsibility to ensure those documents are completed, academic decisions, missed deadlines, personal debts, housing arrangements, employment decisions, or other matters within the student's control.

This includes any school 3rd party billing or school sponsorship forms. Fill out your student information before sending it to me by email. This needs to be done before the start of your school semester.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted annually.

Application deadline for school year:
April 30

The Gitsegukla Education Department considers the school year to be September to May. Any Spring/Summer semesters are considered outside of this and are only approved if yearly post-secondary budgets can support it.

Applications must include:

- Completed application form;
- Letter of acceptance or registration confirmation;
- Program cost information;
- Academic plan;
- Official transcripts;
- Disclosure of other funding sources;
- Dependent documentation where applicable.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Annual Funding Approval

Approval for sponsorship is granted on an academic year basis only.

Receipt of sponsorship in one academic year does not guarantee approval in future academic years.

All students must reapply annually and meet eligibility, academic, and funding requirements in effect at the time of application.

Student Declaration

Applicants are responsible for ensuring all information provided to the Education Department is accurate, complete, and current.

Failure to disclose relevant information, providing false information, withholding information, or misrepresenting circumstances may result in suspension of sponsorship, recovery of funds, and future ineligibility for sponsorship.

The Education Department reserves the right to verify information provided by applicants.

Funding Priorities

Where funding is limited, priority shall be assigned as follows:

1. Continuing students in good standing;
2. Recent Grade 12 graduates;
3. Deferred applicants;
4. Final-year students;
5. Programs demonstrating community benefit;
6. Graduate students;
7. Second credentials;
8. Discretionary requests.

9. Eligible Institutions

Eligible institutions include:

- Public colleges and universities;
  - Indigenous post-secondary institutions;
  - Accredited apprenticeship and trades institutions;
  - Accredited online and distance learning providers;
  - Approved international institutions.

Preference shall be given to public institutions.

Student Status

Full-time and part-time status shall be determined by the educational institution.

Only full-time students are eligible for living allowance support.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance may include:

- Tuition and mandatory fees;
  - Required books a once a year $500 school supply allowance
  - Living allowance;
  - Travel assistance;

- Approved tutoring and academic support;
- Other approved educational costs.

Funding rates shall be established annually through Operating Guidelines.

Program and Enrollment Changes

Students must obtain written approval from the Education Department before:

- Changing programs;
- Changing institutions;
- Reducing course load;
- Withdrawing from courses;
- Taking an academic leave;
- Extending the normal length of their program.

Failure to obtain prior approval may result in loss of sponsorship eligibility for affected courses, terms, or program costs.

Limitations on Financial Assistance

Only supports specifically identified in this policy or the annual Operating Guidelines are eligible for funding.

Requests for expenses outside approved categories shall not be considered unless specifically authorized by the Education Department under exceptional circumstances.

Financial hardship alone does not create eligibility for additional sponsorship benefits or funding beyond approved program supports.

Academic Accommodation

Students approved for a reduced full-time course load due to a documented disability will be considered full-time for sponsorship purposes. Requests for sponsorship beyond the normal length of the program will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account academic progress, available funding, and the student's accommodation needs. This documentation must be provided by a mental healthcare professional and verified by the academic institution.

Living Allowance

Living allowance is intended to assist with reasonable educational living costs and is not intended to replace employment income.

Rates shall be established annually through Operating Guidelines.

Students are encouraged to seek scholarships, bursaries, employment, and other available supports.

Dependent Support

Dependent support shall be established annually through Operating Guidelines.

Eligible dependents must:

- Reside primarily with the student;
  - Be supported by legal documentation;
  - Be under 18 years of age.

The Education Department may establish maximum household support limits.

Base Living Allowance

- Full-time student rate (as of July 2026 $2200/month)

Dependent Supplement

- First dependent: +$300/month
- Second dependent: +$150/month
- Third dependent and beyond: no additional supplement

Residence and Dormitory Accommodation

Students choosing residence or dormitory accommodation remain eligible for living allowance.

Where residence costs are paid directly by the Education Department, those costs shall be deducted from the student's approved annual living allowance allocation.

The remaining balance shall be distributed on a prorated monthly basis.

Students shall not receive both full living allowance and residence costs funded separately.

Travel Assistance

Travel assistance shall be based on the most economical reasonable option.

Standard travel assistance may include:

- Travel to school at the beginning of the academic year;
  - One return trip during the December break;
  - Return travel at the conclusion of the academic year.

In any case, travel is limited to this format. Travel beyond this is the responsibility of the student. The Education Department prioritizes tuition and living allowance over travel. There are no extra travel allowances for students taking Spring or Summer semesters.

Emergency travel requests may be considered on a case-by-case basis. And is only covered where yearly post-secondary budgets permit.

Transportation by Parent or Family Member

Where a student is transported by a parent, guardian, spouse, family member, or other private individual, travel assistance may be provided at a rate of $0.25 per kilometre.

Travel assistance is intended to offset reasonable fuel costs and is not intended to generate income or profit.

Where a parent or family member transports a student to their educational institution and returns home, reimbursement shall normally be limited to the one-way distance travelled by the student.

Return travel by the driver shall be considered a personal expense and shall not normally be reimbursed.

The Education Department may limit reimbursement to the lower of:

- $0.25 per kilometre based on the approved one-way distance; or
- The most economical reasonable transportation option available.

Ferry, parking, tolls, or other required transportation costs may be considered only where receipts are provided and the costs are pre-approved.

Exceptions may be approved only where extraordinary circumstances exist and supporting documentation is provided.

Travel Authorization

Travel assistance must be directly related to attendance at an approved educational institution.

When a travel agent is used, the student does not have authorization to make any changes that may incur extra costs. If they do, those costs must be covered by the student.

Travel costs incurred without prior approval may not be reimbursed.

The Education Department reserves the right to determine the most economical reasonable mode of transportation and may limit reimbursement accordingly.

Funding Limitations

Funding shall normally be limited to one credential at each educational level.

Extensions require institutional documentation and are subject to available funding. It is expected that students will complete their credentials in the standard timeframe.

Second credentials and graduate studies shall receive lower funding priority than continuing students and recent high school graduates.

Academic Requirements

Students must:

- Maintain satisfactory academic standing;
  - Successfully complete at least 75% of attempted courses;
  - Submit transcripts after each academic term;
  - Maintain full-time status unless approved otherwise.

Program Completion Expectations

Students are expected to make reasonable progress toward completion of their approved credential.

Repeated withdrawals, repeated program changes, repeated academic probation, or a pattern of unsuccessful academic performance will result in reduced funding priority, probation, suspension, or denial of future sponsorship.

The Education Department may consider a student's complete sponsorship history when determining future eligibility.

Communication Requirements

Students are responsible for maintaining communication with the Education Department throughout their studies.

Requests affecting sponsorship, enrollment status, travel, program changes, withdrawals, appeals, or exceptional circumstances must be submitted in writing.

Verbal discussions, text messages, or informal conversations do not constitute approval of any request unless confirmed in writing by the Education Department.

Academic Probation

Students may be placed on academic probation where academic performance falls below required standards.

Students on probation may be required to:

- Sign an Academic Probation Agreement;
  - Submit progress reports;
  - Participate in academic supports;
  - Successfully complete all courses during the probation period.

Failure to satisfy probation requirements may result in suspension of sponsorship.

Suspension and Reinstatement

Funding may be suspended where students:

- Fail to maintain satisfactory academic standing;
- Misuse funding;
- Fail to disclose relevant information;
- Fail to submit required documentation.

Students seeking reinstatement must demonstrate academic readiness and may be required to complete coursework at their own expense before reapplying.

Documentation of Exceptional Circumstances

Students experiencing medical, family, financial, personal, or compassionate circumstances that may affect academic performance are responsible for notifying the Education Department as soon as reasonably possible.

Supporting documentation must be provided during the academic term in which the circumstance occurred.

Documentation submitted after final grades have been issued may not be considered sufficient grounds for exemption from probation, suspension, repayment obligations, or other policy requirements.

The responsibility to communicate academic concerns rests with the student.

Appeals

Appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 calendar days.

Appeals shall be limited to:

- Eligibility determinations;
- Academic probation decisions;
- Funding termination decisions;
- Administrative errors.

Appeals shall not be accepted for:

- Funding shortages;
- Budget limitations;
- Funding priorities;
- Approved funding rates.

Appeal decisions are final.

Operating Guidelines

The Education Department shall establish annual Operating Guidelines setting rates and procedures for:

- Tuition;
  - Books and supplies;
  - Living allowance;
  - Dependent support;
  - Travel assistance;
  - Other approved supports.

Operating Guidelines may be amended annually without requiring amendment to this policy.

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed at least every three years or sooner where required by legislation, ISC program changes, or operational needs.