

GWICH'IN EDUCATION FUND POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Gwich'in Education Fund policy is to provide financial assistance to Gwich'in Participants (Participants) in pursuit of their educational endeavours, building capacity within the Gwich'in Nation and for long term economic growth.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) Education and Training Department was established after the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA) was signed in 1992. The full and successful implementation of the GCLCA will depend on having fully trained beneficiaries employed by Gwich'in organizations and other organizations and sectors.
- 2.2 To ensure Participants become more skilled and employable, it is essential that:
 - 2.2.1 Education and training be given a high priority among Participants;
 - 2.2.2 Education and training be given a high priority as reflected in the priorities of the GTC, its subsidiaries and associated organizations; and
 - 2.2.3 Education and training be given a high priority as reflected in our Access and Benefits Agreements.
- 2.3 This will ensure that Participants attain the necessary knowledge and skills to fully staff positions in all Gwich'in organizations and will also ensure that
- 2.4 Participants are in a position to participate in other sectors of the economy, such as in government and the community at large.

3. Source of Funding

- 3.1 The GTC has a number of existing internal communications channels available. Currently, there are three funding sources available to support education and training initiatives:
 - 3.1.1 Gwich'in Education Fund (GEF) allocated through the GTC budgeting process;
 - 3.1.2 Indigenous Skills to Employment Training Strategy Program (ISETS).
 - 3.1.3 Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP).
- 3.2 This document deals only with funding under the Gwich'in Education Fund.

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4. Types of Funding

- 4.1 Bursaries are given to full time post-secondary students.
- 4.2 Scholarships are awarded to students who achieve academic excellence during the term of studies.
- 4.3 Graduation gifts are available to students who have completed high school and a post-secondary program of at least one (1) year in length.

5. General Eligibility Requirements

- 5.1 To qualify for bursary, scholarship or graduation gift, an applicant must:
 - 5.1.1 Be a Registered Participant;
 - 5.1.2 Be in good standing with the Education Fund of the GTC (including funding provided under Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training (ASETS)/ISETS). Funding will not be considered until satisfactory repayment arrangements have been made;
 - 5.1.3 Have a primary funding source, such as Government of the Northwest Territories Student Financial Assistance (GNWT SFA), territorial or provincial student assistance programs or other funding sources;
 - 5.1.4 Final funding decisions are dependent upon the applicant meeting all program criteria; and
 - 5.1.5 Subject to availability of funds and is subject to change.

6. Priority Consideration Clause

- 6.1 Due to a limited budget and the number of students returning to school it may not be possible to fund all students.
- 6.2 Student applications will be considered in the following order:
 - 6.2.1 Continuing students in a Degree or Diploma Program (4th year, 3rd year, 2nd year, 1st year)
 - 6.2.2 New students in a Degree or Diploma Program
 - 6.2.3 Certification/Trades Programs, (4th year, 3rd year, 2nd year, 1st year)
 - 6.2.4 Certificate Programs

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- 6.2.5 University and College Access Program (UCAP), Occupations and College Access Program (OCAP), or University and College Preparation Program (UCEP) Program. Students in an Adult Basic Literacy Education (ALBE) program MAY be eligible for funding, pending availability.
- 6.2.6 Student in a post-graduate program

Note: Please advise the GTC Education and Training Department if you are a new applicant of a First Nations designated and directed institution.

7. Bursary

- 7.1 The bursary provides financial assistance to help offset living expenses for full time students enrolled in approved post-secondary or training programs.

7.2 Eligibility

Eligible applicants must:

- 7.2.1 Be enrolled at an approved designated educational institution whose education institution type is classified as one of the following:
 - 7.2.1.1 Accredited Post-Secondary Institution.
 - 7.2.1.2 Accreditation from a professional regulatory body.
 - 7.2.1.3 Accredited by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).
 - 7.2.1.4 First Nations designated and directed institutions.

A list of Canadian educational institutions currently recognized, authorized, registered, and licensed by competent authorities in the provinces and territories of Canada is available through the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials.

Students enrolled at an approved designated educational institution classified as private and can provide written confirmation from the educational institution that full credit courses are recognized by and transferable to publicly funded educational institutions identified in clause 7.2.1.

Applicants must meet with the GTC Education and Training staff to confirm full understanding of potential implications attending private institutions.

- 7.2.2 Be deemed as a full-time student:

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- 7.2.2.1 By the educational institution enrolled in a post-secondary program with full-credit courses that is at least 12 continuous weeks in length and leads to a certificate, diploma, or degree;
- 7.2.2.2 Training program with full-credit courses that is at least 8 continuous weeks in length and leads to a license, certification or journey person status upon completion; and
- 7.2.2.3 Be enrolled in a OCAP or UCAP (ACCESS) program up to a maximum of one academic year only.

7.3 **Maximum Bursary Funding**

Due to a limited budget and the number of students returning to school it may not be possible to fund all students. Applications will be reviewed based on the following:

- 7.3.1 Applicant file will be reviewed by program staff to determine prior funding received;
- 7.3.2 Applicant history of previous education program completion; and
- 7.3.3 Applicant education progress and career goals.

7.4 **Non-fundable program and courses**

- 7.4.1 Adult Basic Education may not be eligible for funding. The GTC education and training staff can provide guidance on alternative funding sources.
- 7.4.2 Students who make a significant change in their program of studies from one year to the next may not be eligible for funding. Students must seek career counseling from the GTC Department of Education and Training and wait one full year to receive further funding.
- 7.4.3 Part-time courses may be considered for funding at a prorated amount, pending availability of funds.

7.5 **Bursary Application Process**

An applicant must submit:

- 7.5.1 A completed application for funding (each year).
- 7.5.2 Proof of acceptance/continuance from the post-secondary educational institution.

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- 7.5.3 Official transcripts indicating successful completion of the most recent or previous academic year at the required overall 60% grade point average. Further funding under any education and training foundation program will not be provided until a transcript is received.
- 7.5.4 Unofficial documentation is not accepted.
- 7.5.5 Proof of primary funding source, i.e. a letter from GNWTSFA, territorial or provincial student grant.
- 7.5.6 Documentation from a financial institution to confirm personal banking information for direct deposit.
- 7.5.7 An application and required documents by the applicable deadline:
 - 7.5.7.1 July 15 for post-secondary programs starting between August or September;
 - 7.5.7.2 November 15 for post-secondary programs starting in January;
 - 7.5.7.3 March 15 for post-secondary programs starting in the May; and
 - 7.5.7.4 For all other programs and approved training programs, application must be received 30 days prior.

Please Note: GTC Education Staff may consider special circumstances outside of the traditional dates above depending on funding availability and departmental capacity.

All applications are to be forwarded to:

Gwich'in Tribal Council
Education & Training
education@gwichintribal.ca
Phone 867-777-7900
Fax 867-777-7919

7.6 **Bursary Approval/Notification Process**

- 7.6.1 Applicants who have met the deadlines as outlined will receive written notice of conditional approval or denial within three weeks of the published deadline. Final approval will be granted once the GTC receives an applicant's fully completed application.
- 7.6.2 The decision will be based on:

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- 7.6.2.1 A completed application meeting all the eligibility criteria set out in the policy.
- 7.6.2.2 The applicant's grades in the last semester.
- 7.6.2.3 Availability of funding for the period requested.
- 7.6.2.4 Applicant must be in good standing with the Education Fund of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (including funding provided under ASETS/ISETS). Funding will not be considered until satisfactory repayment arrangements have been made.
- 7.6.2.5 Applications are approved based on the applicant meeting all the guidelines of the program.
- 7.6.2.6 Review of the application is done collectively by the education and training staff.
- 7.6.2.7 Each application will be evaluated on the approval form.
- 7.6.2.8 Applicants who receive conditional approval will have 30 days to submit outstanding supporting documents. Applicants may arrange an extension with staff.

7.7 Bursary Payment

- 7.7.1 The bursary amount available:
 - 7.7.1.1 For a single applicant is five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per month.
 - 7.7.1.2 For an applicant with a dependant(s) is seven hundred dollars (\$700.00) per month (dependant must live with the applicant during the term of study).
 - 7.7.1.3 Students enrolled in a full-time master's degree program who do not qualify under the PSSSP may receive up to a maximum of \$5,000 per semester to assist with the cost of tuition, books, and mandatory expenses.
 - 7.7.1.4 Students enrolled in a full-time doctoral program who do not qualify under the PSSSP may receive up to a maximum of \$6,000 per semester to assist with the cost of tuition, books, and mandatory expenses.

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- 7.7.1.5 A student who attends school less than 10 days in a month will receive a pro-rated amount.
- 7.7.1.6 Is subject to availability of funds and is subject to change.
- 7.7.2 Payments will be issued at the following times:
 - 7.7.2.1 July 15 Application Deadline – First week of the month starting in September;
 - 7.7.2.2 Nov 15 Application Deadline – First week of the month starting in January;
 - 7.7.2.3 March 15 Application Deadline – First week of the month starting in April; and
 - 7.7.2.4 All other payments will be issued when the required information is provided.
- 7.7.3 Students will be required to provide the following before any payment will be processed:
 - 7.7.3.1 Proof of their continued attendance at school;
- 7.7.4 If a student fails to:
 - 7.7.4.1 Complete their program of study or does not maintain an average of 60%, the full amount provided to the student may be deemed repayable by the student. The file will be sent to the GTC Finance office for collection and the student will be placed on the default list.
- 7.7.5 Payment is at the discretion of the GTC Education & Training Department Staff.

8. Scholarship

Scholarships are awarded to students who achieve academic excellence **during** their program of studies.

8.1 Scholarship Eligibility

To qualify for a scholarship an applicant:

- 8.1.1 Must meet general eligibility requirements.
- 8.1.2 Is subject to priority consideration clause.

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- 8.1.3 Be a current student in receipt of the GEF Bursary.
- 8.1.4 Must achieve an overall 80% average for the initial semester to be verified by an official transcript from the educational institution.

8.2 **Scholarship Application Process**

An applicant must:

- 8.2.1 Submit a completed application.
- 8.2.2 Provide official transcripts indicating that the applicant has achieved an overall 80% average for the completed semester of study.
- 8.2.3 Apply for a scholarship within forty-five (45) days after completion of the academic year
- 8.2.4 All applications are to be forwarded to:

Gwich'in Tribal Council
Education & Training
education@gwichintribal.ca
Phone 867-777-7900
Fax 867-777-7919

8.3 **Scholarship Approval/Notification Process**

Applicants will receive electronic notice approval or denial within 2 weeks of receiving the complete application. The decision will be based on:

- 8.3.1 A completed application meeting all the eligibility criteria set out in the policy;
- 8.3.2 Availability of funding for the period requested; and
- 8.3.3 Applicant must be in good standing with the Education & Training Division of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (including funding provided under ASETS).

8.4 **Scholarship Payment**

Payment of the Scholarship:

- 8.4.1 Be issued within 2 weeks of the Education and Training Staff's review and approval of the application;

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- 8.4.2 Be sent to the applicant in the in the form of a cheque or by direct deposit;
- 8.4.3 Be paid during the program of study; and
- 8.4.4 Is subject to availability of funds and is subject to change.

8.5 **Scholarship Payment Amount**

Eligible applicants will receive the following:

- 8.5.1 \$200.00 for each eligible full-time semester up to maximum of 2 semesters for a Certificate Program;
- 8.5.2 \$200.00 for each eligible full-time semester up to maximum of 4 semesters for a Diploma Program;
- 8.5.3 \$200.00 for each eligible full-time semester up to maximum of 6 semesters for a three year Degree Program; and
- 8.5.4 \$200.00 for each eligible full-time semester up to maximum of 8 semesters for a four year Degree Program.

Note: An applicant who completes a certificate program and continues studies to a diploma or degree program may only be eligible up to the maximum amount payable under the corresponding diploma or degree program.

9. **Graduation Gifts**

Graduation gifts are available to students who have completed high school or post-secondary program. If feasible and dependent on staff availability, presentation of a congratulatory card will be delivered to the graduate in person at the graduation ceremony.

9.1. **Eligibility**

To qualify for a Graduation Gift, an applicant must:

- 9.1.1. Meet general eligibility requirements;
- 9.1.2. Is subject to priority consideration clause;
- 9.1.3. Have met graduation requirements.

9.2. **Fundable Programs**

Eligible applicants must have met graduation requirements from a:

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- 9.2.1. High school;
- 9.2.2. Recognized post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree where Program was at an approved designated educational institution whose education institution type is classified as a:
 - 9.2.2.1. University
 - 9.2.2.2. Junior College
 - 9.2.2.3. Technical and Vocational
 - 9.2.2.4. Private College
 - 9.2.2.5. Program is a minimum of one year (minimum of 2 semesters) in length.
 - 9.2.2.6. Post-Secondary institutions that are First Nation designated and directed
 - 9.2.2.7. Registered apprenticeship trade program with journey person Certification

9.3. **Grad Gift Application Process**

An applicant must:

- 9.3.1. Submit a completed application.
- 9.3.2. Provide official documentation proving that the applicant has achieved graduation requirements for:
 - 9.3.2.1. Grade 12, a copy of the high school diploma within 12 months of graduation
 - 9.3.2.2. Post-Secondary certificate, diploma or degree programs, a copy of official transcripts and parchment within 12 months of graduation
 - 9.3.2.3. Trade Program, a copy of Journey Person Certification within 12 months of completion.
- 9.3.3. All applications are to be forwarded to:

Gwich'in Tribal Council
Education & Training
education@gwichintribal.ca
Phone 867-777-7900
Fax 867-777-7919

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9.4. **Grad Gift Approval/Notification Process**

Applicants will receive written notice of approval or denial within 2 weeks of GTC receiving:

- 9.4.1. A completed application meeting all the eligibility criteria set out in the policy;
- 9.4.2. Applicant must be in good standing with the Education Fund of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (including funding provided under ASETS); and
- 9.4.3. Availability of funding for the period requested.

9.5. **Payment Amount**

9.5.1. Eligible applicants will receive the following:

- 9.5.1.1. Degree Programs (\$400.00)
- 9.5.1.2. Diploma Programs (\$300.00)
- 9.5.1.3. Trade Certification (\$400.00)
- 9.5.1.4. Certificate Programs (\$200.00)
- 9.5.1.5. High school Graduation (\$100.00)

Note: An applicant who completes a certificate program and continues studies to a diploma or degree program may only be eligible up to the maximum amount payable under the corresponding diploma or degree program.

9.6. **Criteria for Graduation Gifts**

Graduation gifts will not exceed the maximum specified amount and application approval is dependent on the budgetary restraints imposed on the Department as well as the amount assigned as per the policy. In case there are an extremely high number of graduates in any one year, the amount of the graduation gift may be reduced to stay within budgetary confines.

10. **Tutoring Program**

The tutoring program is managed through the GEF and is designed to provide assistance for students experiencing difficulty in an academic area of the curriculum.

10.1. **Tutoring Eligibility**

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To qualify for tutoring, a student:

- 10.1.1 Must be a Registered Participant.
- 10.1.2 Must be enrolled in an elementary, high school and post-secondary program.
- 10.1.3 Must be referred by institutions, classroom instructors, Teachers or parent.

10.2. **Eligible Services**

Tutoring services are limited to the following:

- 10.2.1. Tutorial support may include “public” tutoring, available on site at schools, or “private” tutoring, where students receive individual support;
- 10.2.2. Tutors providing a service to students under the age of 19 must provide a clear criminal record check;
- 10.2.3. Prior approval is based on the tutors resume and an acceptable agreed rate of pay and hours per week; and
- 10.2.4. Is subject to availability of funds and is subject to change.

10.3. **Tutoring Application Process**

10.3.1 **For an applicant under the age of 19:**

- 10.3.1.1. The completed application must be submitted by the referring school or parent;
- 10.3.1.2. application must identify the name of the tutor. It is the responsibility of the applicant to find a tutor.
- 10.3.1.3. a copy of the Tutor’s Criminal Records Check must accompany form; and
- 10.3.1.4. a copy of the Tutor’s resume must accompany application.

10.3.2. **For an applicant over the age of 19:**

- 10.3.2.1. The completed application must be submitted by the referring school;
- 10.3.2.2. application must identify the name of the tutor. It is the responsibility of the applicant to find a tutor and;

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10.3.2.3. a copy of the tutor's resume must accompany application.

10.3.3. All applications are to be forwarded to:

Gwich'in Tribal Council
Education & Training
education@gwichintribal.ca
Phone 867-777-7900
Fax 867-777-7919

10.4. **Tutoring Program Approval/Notification Process**

Applicants (including parents and school staff) will receive written notice approval or denial letter within 2 weeks of the internal committee meeting. The decision will be based on:

10.4.1. A completed application meeting all the eligibility criteria set out in the policy;

10.4.2. A predetermined set amount of tutoring hours;

10.4.3. Availability of funding for the period requested; and

10.4.4. Applicant must be in good standing with the Education Training Division of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (including funding provided under ISETS).

10.5. **Tutoring Payment**

Tutoring payments will be paid directly to tutors. To receive payment, a tutor must:

10.5.1. Submit a monthly tutoring log:

10.5.1.1. Tutoring log must identify established pre-approved hourly rate not to exceed \$50.00/hour;

10.5.1.2. Maximum tutor time is 3 hours a week; and

10.5.1.3. Payment must not exceed the maximum number of pre-approved tutoring hours.

10.5.2. Submit a student progress report for each individual student to whom they have been assigned;

10.5.3. Inform the GTC of students who repeatedly fail to meet scheduled sessions.

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11. Default List

The GTC endeavors to ensure all students succeed with their post-secondary pursuits. Subsequently, the GTC must ensure that best use of education funds are maximized to fund as many eligible applicants as possible.

It is the responsibility of any student to inform the GTC if they are unable to complete their education program and the reason for not completing. Additionally, students must advise the department of any changes made to their semester schedule.

In accordance with the guidelines and criteria set forth in the foregoing policy and at the discretion of the GTC and/or its staff, funds provided to students will become repayable and ineligibility for further funding will result from but is not limited to the following circumstances.

11.1 Circumstances Outside of Student Control

Circumstances beyond a student's control include reasons such as medical/health reasons, death in immediate family or serious illness in the immediate family.

11.1.1 An immediate family member is defined as mother, father, sister, brother, spouse, children, and foster children.

11.1.2 Students in this category must submit documentation prior to leaving their studies.

11.1.2.1 A letter to the Education and Training Manager asking for their situation to be considered for exemption prior to discontinuing the educational program; and

11.1.2.2 A letter from the student's healthcare provider confirming that the student is not able to continue studies for medical reasons; and/or

11.1.2.3 A letter from the student's counselor confirming that the student is not able to continue studies due to psychological/mental wellness reasons

11.1.3 If a student is unable to complete their education or training program due to circumstances beyond their control, repayment of funding received by a student may be waived by the GTC as determined on a case-by-case basis.

11.2 Circumstances Within Student Control

Circumstances within a student's control include reasons such as low marks, poor attendance, program withdrawal, dropping from full time student to part-time and/or not meeting minimum program/course requirements.

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- 11.2.1 Students in this category, will have their names placed on a default list, where the amount of funding received by the student for the fundable period, becomes due and payable to the Gwich'in Tribal Council.

12. Student Debt Repayment Plan

- 12.1 Students who are indebted to the GTC, because of not completing their program of studies, due to circumstances within their control, will be placed on the default list and not be eligible for funding until the funding has been repaid in full.

12.1.1 Students Not Returning to Education

Students on the Default List may become re-eligible to apply for funding once efforts have been made to repay debt. A student has the option of repaying the funding amount in full or to set up an agreement to make partial payments. A student shall arrange for a repayment of debt by:

- 12.1.1.1 Contacting GTC Finance Department to arrange a full payment by cheque or money order; or
- 12.1.1.2 Contacting GTC Education staff to set up a repayment plan

12.1.2 Students Returning to Education

A student wishing to resume their education but who are on the Default List can make partial payments towards the debt. A student may reapply for funding and if approved, must agree to have a portion of their funding amount deducted from their payment. A student must:

- 12.1.2.1 Contact GTC Education staff to reapply for funding.
- 12.1.2.2 Meet with GTC Education staff to set up a repayment plan.
- 12.1.2.3 This plan shall set out a monthly repayment fee that allows the debt to be repaid while minimizing financial hardship for the student.

13. Student Debt Recovery Process

To recover funds from students who do not complete their education due to circumstances within their control, GTC program staff will take make reasonable effort to collect student debt.

- 13.1 Program staff will:
- 13.1.1 Request a student payment report from GTC Finance to confirm payment amounts issued to the student.
 - 13.1.2 Request an invoice for amount owed from GTC Finance.

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- 13.1.3 Issue a letter requesting repayment, accompanied by a copy of the student's application for funding and payments received to date to be sent to the student; and
- 13.1.4 Provide copies of documentation to GTC Finance.
- 13.2 Should funds not paid back, the student's name will be placed on the Default List.
- 13.3 GTC Finance will make reasonable effort to collect the debt from any or all amounts from payments such as wages, expense claims or other benefits issued by GTC to the student.
- 13.4 The student will be ineligible for future funding or until repayment arrangements have been made to clear the debt.

14. Appeals Process

If the applicant is not satisfied with the decision, they can appeal the decision to the GTC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who hears appeals for all programs. The appeal process is as follows:

- 14.1 The appeal must be made in writing to the CEO within thirty (30) days from the date the appellant was denied funding.
- 14.2 The CEO will acknowledge written receipt of the appeal and provide the appellant with a date when an appeal decision will be made.
- 14.3 All supporting documentation will be provided by program staff and by the appellant to the CEO, who will make the final decision.
- 14.4 The CEO or their designate will advise the appellant of the decision within fifteen (15) business days from the date of the appeal. The decision will be made in written form and is final.

15. Forms

Forms to have on file:

- Forms A, B, C, D
- GTC Finance Direct Deposit Form
- Grad Gift - Scholarship Application
- Tutoring Application

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Appendix A – Schedule of Rates

Category	Single Student	Student with Dependents
Post-Secondary Bursary	\$500.00/month	\$700.00/month
Tuition Bursary – Master's Student	Up to a maximum of \$5000.00/semester	
Tuition Bursary – PhD Student	Up to a maximum of \$6000.00/semester	
Grad Gift	Degree Programs	\$400.00
	Diploma Programs	\$300.00
	Trade Certification	\$400.00
	Certificate Programs	\$200.00
	High school Graduation	\$100.00
Scholarship – Based on 80% grade	\$200.00 for each eligible fulltime semester up to maximum of 2 semesters for a Certificate Program;	
	\$200.00 for each eligible fulltime semester up to maximum of 4 semesters for a Diploma Program;	
	\$200.00 for each eligible fulltime semester up to maximum of 6 semesters for a three year Degree Program; and	
	\$200.00 for each eligible fulltime semester up to maximum of 8 semesters for a four year Degree Program	