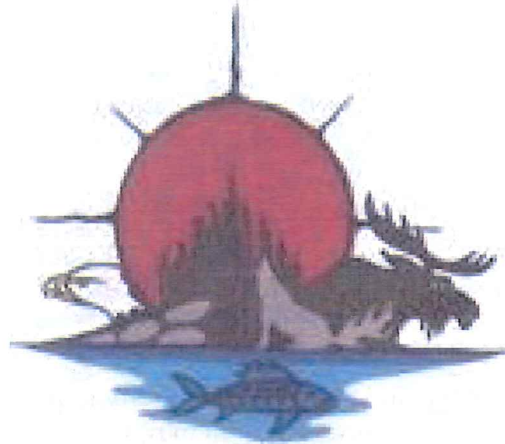


# MISIPAWISTIK CREE NATION

## POST SECONDARY EDUCATION HANDBOOK



July 2021

## Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the services provided to Misipawistik Cree Nation members who are seeking financial assistance through the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Student Assistance Program.

The objective of the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Student Assistance Program is to assist MCN members gain access to Post-Secondary education and to graduate with the qualifications and skills needed to pursue individual careers and to contribute to the achievement of First Nation self-governance and Economic self-reliance.

Misipawistik Cree Nation encourages independence, self-motivation, and personal academic growth. It is hoped that the financial support provided by this program will further develop the talents and abilities of our people in preparing for community economic self-sufficiency. Our people are our greatest resource and through their personal growth, skill development, and leadership, they will safeguard our language, our history, our rights and our lands.

Misipawistik Cree Nation requires its students to be committed to successfully gaining a Post-Secondary education. Because of the increased demand for our limited funds we must stress that students will be selected based on the criteria outlined in this Handbook.

The Post-Secondary Education Student Assistance Program is funded by Indigenous Services Canada.

The primary objective of the MCN Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program is to provide financial assistance to those MCN members who want to pursue post-secondary studies. **For our purposes Post-Secondary studies refer to any programs that are 10 months in length or longer.**

In the past MCN members have had to leave the community to pursue their post-secondary dreams. Studying in the community is now possible with the delivery of College and University programs through a joint initiative with the University College of the North (UCN) and with the expanded options that are offered by many universities and colleges through on-line learning.

In addition, to help support the growing need for more employment and training the MCN Employment and Training (MCN E/T) Program offers a variety of career and training options. The MCN Employment & Training Program can sponsor those who are entering College Programs for a maximum of two (2) years. Another program affiliated with MCN E/T is Employment Manitoba where some may be eligible to apply for sponsorship. Like MCN E/T, Employment Manitoba will sponsor students in College programs for a maximum of two (2) years. For further information on these programs and how to apply, please call Employment and Training at the MCN Office at 1-204-639-2219.

# Misipawistik Cree Nation

## Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program

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## Sponsorship Criteria

To be eligible to apply for sponsorship through the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Student Assistance Program an applicant must:

1. Be a member in good standing.
2. Submit a completed Post-Secondary Education Assistance Application Form to the Director of Education, by the established deadlines:
  - a. Fall term (Sept) – June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Winter term (Jan) – December 1<sup>st</sup>, depending on funding availability
  - c. Spring term (Apr) – February 28<sup>th</sup>, depending on funding availability
  - d. Summer term (July) – February 28<sup>th</sup>, depending on funding availability
3. Provide a letter of acceptance from an accredited Post-Secondary Educational Institution, for a program that is 10 months in length or longer.
4. Be prepared to sign a contract outlining Misipawistik Cree Nation and Student responsibilities (Appendix 1).
5. Maintain a 2.0 GPA, 60-65%, and/or C Grade.

Applications that do not meet the criteria will be forwarded to Misipawistik Cree Nation Employment and Training for possible funding.

## Sponsorship Procedures

### **1. Application process**

To be considered for sponsorship or continuation of funding, the following conditions must be met:

1. Students **must** be accepted by an accredited Post-Secondary Institution.
2. Once students have received acceptance at an accredited Post-Secondary Institution they must submit an application for Post-Secondary Education Assistance to Misipawistik Cree Nation. The application must include:
  - a. A letter of acceptance
  - b. A completed MCN Post-Secondary Education Assistance Application Form
  - c. Information on Degree/Program indicating duration and cost of program
  - d. A signed Release of Information Authorization Form, giving MCN Education staff access to student records, attendance and transcripts..
3. All new students are encouraged to participate in orientation sessions provided by their educational institution.
4. All continuing students must submit funding applications annually, along with a transcript outlining their grades from the previously sponsored period.
5. Continuing students must submit an MCN Self-Evaluation Progress Report provided by MCN, annually along with their application (Appendix 2).

6. Sponsored Students who are required to discontinue attending a Post-Secondary Institution or who have had their sponsorship suspended must submit documentation that the reason for suspension has been successfully addressed.
7. Students enrolled in institutions outside of Canada will be funded in Canadian funds.
8. Students must pay all required application and registration fees, including 'seat hold' fees and must submit their receipts with their application. Students will be reimbursed once their sponsorship has been approved.

## **2. Sponsorship Selection**

In the event that MCN receives more applications for funding than supportable, the following priority list will be used to determine sponsorship:

1. Continuing students who were sponsored in the previous term and are successfully continuing with their current program.
2. High school graduates who have submitted a completed Post-Secondary Education Assistance Application package.
3. Deferred students and self-sponsored students who were not sponsored the previous year due to budget restrictions. Self-sponsored students are those where sponsorship comes from other sources, they must be successfully continuing in their program.
4. New applicants that meet the sponsorship criteria.
5. Students who received funding in the past and did not meet the criteria for continued sponsorship.

## Types of Assistance

### **A. Full Time Students**

To be considered full time, a student must be registered in a minimum of 24 credit hours during the regular session or maintain a full course load based on their institutions definition of a "full load".

1. Tuition Assistance includes:
  - Public University/College - the actual cost of tuition fees
  - Private University/College - the equivalent cost for the same or equivalent program at a public university/college, the student shall provide the balance of the costs. A list of Private/Public Colleges and Universities is available on the provincial website.

- Tuition is paid directly by MCN. An Authorization to Invoice Letter/Form is sent to the Educational Institution directing them to bill MCN directly for tuition fees.
- All fees required to complete the application are paid directly by the student and can be submitted for reimbursement along with their completed PSP Application form. Receipts shall be reimbursed once the student is selected for sponsorship. This includes all application, registration, 'seat hold' fees, etc.
- Books and Supplies that are required for the program are also paid directly by MCN via an Authorization to Invoice Form. An account is set up at the Bookstore and students sign for their purchase. Only books and supplies assigned to the program may be purchased.
- Conferences/Workshops that are considered compulsory by the Educational Institution may qualify for support. Documentation for the Conference must be submitted when requesting support. Registration, student travel and accommodations may be provided.
- Special equipment/uniforms etc., may be provided if it is required by the program. Documentation for the special equipment must be submitted when making a request.
- Tutorial Assistance may be provided and must be pre-arranged with the Director of Education for approval.
- Tuition shall be paid one time only for any given course. The cost of any retakes shall be the student's responsibility.

## 2. Travel Assistance includes:

- MCN Student Travel rates will be provided to students who are required to live away from their normal place of residence. Travel assistance shall be provided three times a year (beginning of year, Christmas break, end of year).

## 3. Living Allowance

- A living allowance is provided to assist students with their living expenses including but not limited to rent, food, child care, transportation, etc. Students are encouraged to apply for additional financial support to supplement their living expenses. Your student advisor/guidance counsellor may be able to provide further information on available bursaries and student awards.
- A living allowance may be provided for students enrolled in full-time programs in the community that are two years in length or longer.
- We receive our funding on the first of each month therefore student cheques shall be issued for that day.
  - Students are encouraged to open a bank account at the Median Credit Union. We have a branch in Grand Rapids so student cheques can be directly deposited into their accounts, otherwise

cheques shall be sent by mail. All other arrangements are at the student expense. Students choosing to receive their cheques by mail or otherwise may need to make other arrangements for their rent as the cheques may not always arrive by the first. We will make every effort to try to mail student cheques as early as possible.

- MCN student living allowance rates are higher than ISC rates. Chief and Council have chosen to use their own source revenue to subsidize the funding we receive from ISC. The rates can be found in Appendix 3.

## **B. Part Time Students**

MCN may provide assistance to cover tuition, books and supplies for courses taken on a part time basis.

Students must complete a Post-Secondary Education Assistance Application Form when requesting part time educational support.

### **Assistance for Students enrolled in Programs that are not on a daily basis**

For students whose program does not run on a daily basis, such as University Certificate programs or Modular Programs, or on-line universities:

1. MCN may provide the following:
  - Tuition, Books and Supplies, if no other arrangements can be made.
  - Costs associated with studies in the event that the student is required to be away from home, if no other arrangements can be made.

## **Length of Sponsorship**

Each institution/program has an identified time allocation in which the program must be completed. A student must complete their program in the time identified by the institution. Student progress will be monitored to ensure students complete their program in a timely manner and a record shall be maintained by MCN Education that shall be reviewed annually with the student.

A modification to the plan can be made for exceptional circumstances but must be approved by Chief and Council.

Continuing students must be registered in classes that are a natural progression in their studies: such as Bachelor's degree to a Master's degree to a PH. D.

## Termination of Sponsorship

MCN may terminate sponsorship at any time if a student does not abide by the criteria as outlined in the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Handbook and/or Contract.

## Probation

If a student is not fulfilling his/her responsibilities, then MCN may place that student on probation. If a student fails to improve his/her performance, termination of sponsorship may follow.

Probation is for a period of three months during which a student's behavior and progress in his/her program of studies is closely monitored. If after the probationary three month period, the student shows improvement and his/her performance is satisfactory, no further action will be taken and the student will be taken off probation. However the student's progress will continue to be monitored.

If a student fails to show improvement in performance during the probationary period, MCN may suspend the sponsorship. The length of suspension shall be for the following academic year.

## Appeal Process

Appeals can be made where the student feels that the MCN guidelines are not being fairly applied to his/her situation.

To ensure fairness and equitable treatment the following appeal process has been established. All attempts will be made to have a face to face meeting. If a face to face meeting cannot be arranged then a video/teleconference/zoom meeting shall be set up.

If the student must travel to attend a face to face meeting then assistance shall be provided based on the MCN Student Travel rates.

No appeal shall be granted against a refusal of assistance based on lack of funds.



**Procedures**

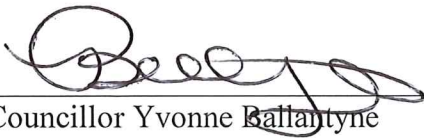
- The student contacts the Director of Education in writing stating his/her intent to appeal a decision.
- The student must provide the following information:
  - Name, address, phone/cell number, email address
  - Institution attended and program of studies enrolled in
  - The reason for the appeal, citing the relevant sections of the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Handbook,
  - A letter of support from the Post-Secondary Institution may be included.
  
- An acknowledgement of the receipt of the request for an appeal will be sent to the student and a date will be set to hear the appeal.
- Chief and Council's ruling will be based on a quorum vote.
- Decisions made by Chief and Council will be final.



Chief Heidi Cook



Councillor Tyler Lavallee



Councillor Yvonne Ballantyne



Councillor Annie Ballantyne

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX 1

**POST SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM (SAMPLE)**

Contract for Post-Secondary Education Assistance between (Student)Misipawistik Cree Nation.

Students are expected to plan to the best of their ability all aspects of their future education and training. This includes making informed and reasonable decisions with regards to program and class choices, place of residence, and healthy living. When needed, students are expected to seek out assistance and counseling to ensure a successful education experience.

As a sponsored student I agree that I will:

- attend classes regularly; register in a minimum course load, as required by my sponsorship,
- consult with appropriate counselors if any problems arise academically, emotionally, physically or financially;
- inform the Director of Education regarding any changes to my application and/or registration;
- inform the Director of Education if I encounter any difficulties so that we can resolve them before they interfere with my schooling;
- maintain 2.0 GPA, completing my program within the specified time allocation;
- accept and meet the standards outlined in the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Handbook;
- provide official transcripts when requested to Misipawistik Cree Nation;
- manage to the best of my ability my education funds from Misipawistik Cree Nation;
- follow through with the intent of this application.
- be a role model for MCN youth and take every opportunity to encourage them to seek further education.
- Pay for any course that I must retake.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to comply with each of the above conditions and acknowledge and understand that future education financial assistance could be jeopardized should I fail to comply.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Misipawistik Cree Nation, Chief and Council** agree to the following conditions under the Misipawistik Cree Nation Post-Secondary Education Assistance program:

- Provided all the requirements are met and there is funding available, Misipawistik Cree Nation will provide the following:
  - Part-time Students: Tuition and related fees, required books and supplies,
  - Full-time Students: Tuition and related fees, required books and supplies, Monthly Living Allowance, and all other applicable costs.
- That all payments shall be processed in a timely manner,
- That all MCN members will be treated equitably/equally,
- That an appeal process will be available if necessary,
- That an MCN representative will be available to the student by email and phone.

\_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of MCN Chief and Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX 2

## POST SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

### Self-Evaluation (SAMPLE)

To be completed by student at the end of each year of sponsorship.

All Responses are confidential.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

University/College: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Overall, my academic performance was
2. My areas of strength are:
3. My areas of weakness are:
4. Goals I have been working on this year are:
5. What I found challenging this year was:
6. What I am proud of this year is:
7. Some areas I can improve are:
8. Some areas MCN can improve are:
9. Other Comments:

# APPENDIX 3

STATUS	MONTHLY RATE	
	Out of Community	In-Community
Single Student	1000.00	500.00
Married/Common Law Student with:		
Employed Spouse	1000.00	500.00
1 Dependant	1175.00	590.00
Dependants	1355.00	680.00
Dependants	1530.00	765.00
Married/Common Law Student with:		
Dependant Spouse	1220.00	610.00
1 Dependant	1370.00	685.00
2 Dependants	1530.00	765.00
3 Dependants	1680.00	840.00
Single Parent:		
1 Dependant	1370.00	685.00
2 Dependants	1530.00	765.00
3 Dependants	1680.00	840.00
4 Dependants	1730.00	865.00

Misipawistik Cree Nation Student Travel rates: (subject to review)

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Family</u>
Grand Rapids – The Pas	150	250
Grand Rapids – Brandon	250	450
Grand Rapids – Winnipeg	200	350
Grand Rapids – Thompson	200	350
Norway House – Winnipeg	300	400
The Pas – Winnipeg	300	400
Thompson – Winnipeg	350	500
Out of Province	500	500

