



Wagmatcook First Nation Post-Secondary Education Student Financial Assistance Program

Policy Guidelines

June 16, 2021

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1. Objectives

- a) The primary objective of the Wagmatcook Post-Secondary Education Policy is to assist eligible registered community members to gain access to post-secondary education and to graduate with the skills and competencies needed to pursue individual careers and to contribute to the achievement of Mi'kmaq self-government and community self-reliance.
- b) This program is intended to provide financial assistance to eligible registered community members towards the cost of their post-secondary education.
- c) This program policy outlines:
 - i. the criteria to be met by students in order to qualify for financial assistance;
 - ii. the types and maximum levels of allowance available through this program;
 - iii. the maximum duration that may be provided through the Board of Education while a student attends a post-secondary education program.
- d) This policy has been in effect since June 16, 2021 and applies to all students who are funded this academic year (2021-2022) and subsequent academic years.
- e) This program policy shall serve as the operating guidelines for the Wagmatcook Board of Education while administering the program.

2. Definitions

- a) Wagmatcook Mi'kmaq means a person whose name is registered on the Wagmatcook First Nation's members list;
- b) Board of Education is the management unit of the Wagmatcook First Nation responsible for administering this program policy;
- c) Post-Secondary Education means a program of studies offered by recognized post-secondary institution for which completion of secondary school or equivalent is required for admission;
- d) Program of Studies includes all post-secondary programs, at least ten months duration leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree;
- e) Post-Secondary Institutions are degree, diploma and certificate granting institutions which are recognized by a province and include educational institutions affiliated with, or delivering accredited post-secondary programs by arrangement with a post-secondary institutions;
- f) Full Time Students and Part Time Students are defined by the post-secondary institutions;

- g) Academic Year is defined by the post-secondary institution. Semesters usually covers the periods from September to December, January to April, and Spring and Summer Sessions;
- h) Eligible Student means a registered community member of Wagmatcook who meets all admission requirements of the post-secondary institutions, and the funding application requirements of the Board of Education.

3. Eligibility

- a) To be eligible to apply for assistance under the program policy the applicant:
 - i. must be a registered Wagmatcook Mi'kmaq by May 1st each year;
 - ii. must have met post-secondary entrance requirements and provide a copy of acceptance letter to the Board of Education;
 - iii. has completed and submitted an Application for Post-Secondary Education Assistance by May 30th each year;
 - iv. has provided official copies of post-secondary transcripts to the Board of Education at the end of a course or academic term.
- b) Financial assistance will be provided within the limits of the funds approved by Wagmatcook First Nation's Council. Students will be deferred if the number of eligible applicants exceeds the annual approved budget.

4. Student Priority Categories

- 1) High School graduates;
- 2) Full-time Students enrolled in a post-secondary program and who have successfully completed year one or subsequent years of the program with an average of 65% of all courses taken, and are not on academic probation, the successful student must also earn a minimum of 6 – 3 credit courses in the previous year to continue as a full-time student;
- 3) Mature students who are entering a post-secondary school for the first time;
- 4) Students who have completed an undergraduate degree and continue on to an advanced degree program of studies without a break in studies without going over limits of financial assistance (**See 6.b**);
- 5) Students attending Part-time;

- 6) Students whose applications of support were deferred for lack of funds and who are re-applying for school;
- 7) Students who were dismissed previously from post-secondary programs;
- 8) Unsuccessful students from a previous year.

5. Types of Assistance

- a) Tuition – registration, application, tuition, and the cost of books and supplies which are listed by the post-secondary institution will be paid. A \$500.00 advance will be issued on August 31st for the school year's books and supplies. If the cost of tuition exceeds the maximum listed on Appendix A, the student is responsible to pay the difference. If a student requires additional books and supplies, students must submit copies of receipts for additional reimbursement;
- b) Travel Assistance – students who are required to travel over 200km from their permanent place of residence may qualify for up to \$500.00 per year for travel assistance;
- c) Assistance for Living Expenses – a monthly living allowance to help cover students living expenses will be provided. (See appendix A) Students may have their payments sent via e-transfer within Canada. They can also choose to have it picked up at Band Office or mailed out;
- d) Incidentals for Students living in Residence (see appendix A);
- e) Tutoring assistance – based on a written recommendation from the post-secondary institution and a receipt from a university approved tutor up to \$350.00 per academic year.

6. Limits of Financial Assistance

- a) Assistance will be provided to eligible students attending
 - i. undergraduate programs – include bachelor degrees, diplomas, and certificates and;
 - ii. graduate programs – including advanced or professional development programs at the Master or Doctoral level;
 - iii. community college programs – including trades and technology diplomas and certificates for programs exceeding 12 months.

- b) There are limits on financial assistance and no exceptions will be permitted
 - i. **Level 1** – UCEP (University College Education Preparation Programs) requiring a secondary school diploma or equivalent as prerequisite to a certificate or diploma program.
Total Student Assistance Months: 2 years or 16 months.
 - ii. **Level 2** – Undergraduate-a program as defined by the post-secondary institution leading to a Bachelor degree.
Total Student Assistance Months: 4 years or 32 months
 - iii. **Level 3** – Graduate studies-a program that requires an undergraduate degree and leads to a B.Ed., B.SW, LLB and Master's degree.
Total Student Assistance Months: 2 years or 16 months
 - iv. **Level 4** – Community Based programs in collaboration with Wagmatcook Education Authority Limited and Nova Scotia Community College certificate and diploma programs, trades training and employment readiness.
Total Student Assistance Months: 2 years or 16 months.
- c) Students enrolled in community colleges and undergraduate level programs will be assisted for up to one additional academic year if an extension is approved by the faculty chair or the program's dean.

7. Student Responsibilities

- a) Students must apply to the post-secondary institution of their choice. Conditional acceptance and final acceptance should not be assumed that financial assistance will be approved by the Board of Education.
- b) Students must register for courses as required by the post-secondary institution and provide a copy of his/her course registration form to the Manager of the Board of Education. Late registration fees are the responsibility of the student.
- c) Students must maintain an average of 60% or higher depending on the program's requirements. Students who fail to meet this requirement will lose funding.
- d) Full time students must earn a minimum of 24 credits per year. Students who fail to meet this requirement will lose funding.
- e) Students must provide e-mail information for sending e-transfers or a current mailing address for cheque delivery by mail, otherwise cheques will be available at the Band Office for pick up.

- f) Students must sign a “post-secondary file access permission form” and the “Application for Post-Secondary Education Assistance” prior to the start of the academic semester. Tuition payments and living allowances may be withheld if verification of registration or these forms are not available in the student file.
- g) Students who plan to drop or add courses must notify the Post-Secondary Coordinator of the Board of Education. Course selection is extremely important and students may be required to reimburse the Board of Education for courses dropped without a valid reason. Students who add courses to their plan will be eligible to have the tuition, books and supplies paid for those courses.
- h) Students who fail a mandatory core course are required to pay for the course the next time they take it.
- i) Students must provide a personal email to the Wagmatcook Board of Education.

8. Wagmatcook’s Responsibilities

- a) Communicate effectively and openly with all students during the application process and during the academic year.
- b) Review student progress twice per year or as required. Reviews will be conducted by personal interview or telephone call between the Fall and Winter semesters and at the end of the winter semester.
- c) Communicate directly with students.
- d) Collaborate with post-secondary institutions as required from time to time.
- e) Student allowance cheques will be issued on the last Thursday of each month. August 31st will represent the payment for September. Students who fail to meet all the responsibilities will have cheque withheld until requirements are met.
- f) An annual schedule of payment dates will be issued by August 31st each year.

9. Funding Conditions

- a) Students can be asked to withdraw from post-secondary studies when
 - i. limits of assistance have expired;
 - ii. the Board believes a student is not fulfilling their academic responsibilities.

- b) Students who drop out of a post-secondary program will be required to wait two academic years prior to re-applying for full-time post-secondary assistance from the Board of Education. Students are eligible for part time studies and only tuition and books will be funded.
- c) Students who are dismissed from an undergraduate program or fail to meet the requirements of funding (Section 7. c and 7. d) will be required to wait three academic years prior to re-applying for full time post-secondary assistance from the Board of Education.

10. Academic and Graduation Incentives

- a) In recognition of academic achievement the Board of Education will award achievement scholarships to students enrolled as full time students and who have achieved a grade average of B and Higher in their program studies.
 - i. The amount of the scholarships awarded by the Board of Education will be up to \$500.00 annually;
 - ii. Students are eligible for the scholarships upon successful completion of each of their program of studies in undergraduate and graduate schools;
 - iii. Students are required to submit an official copy of their transcripts in order for a scholarship to be awarded.
- b) In recognition of graduation, the Board of Education will grant the following incentives:
 - i. undergraduate
 - diploma/certificate \$500.00
 - bachelor level \$1000.00
 - ii. graduate
 - masters level \$1000.00
 - doctoral level \$1000.00

11. Appeal Process

An eligible student or approved student can appeal a decision of the Wagmatcook Post-Secondary program managers if they believe their application for funding or their post-secondary plan was not fairly and objectively managed.

Students are required to submit a letter describing their complaint and appeal to the Wagmatcook Finance Committee who will review the student's file with the post-secondary managers. An interview with the student may be required by the Finance Committee to confirm the appeal and course of action.

The Finance Committee will meet within ten days of receiving the student's written appeal. The Finance Committee may include a representative of the Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey to hear the appeal. A decision by the Finance Committee is final.

12. Student Information System

Wagmatcook will maintain a post-secondary student information system. All student information will be considered private and confidential.

Appendix A

For students living off residence

Full Time Students

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Living Allowance | \$1,050.00 |
| Tuition & Books | actual cost (max. \$10,000.00 tuition per year) |

Part Time Students

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Travel Assistance | \$150.00 |
| Tuition & Books | actual cost |

For students living on residence

Full Time Students

| | |
|--|---|
| The greater of | |
| Incidentals | \$250.00 |
| <i>or Living Allowance less Meal Plan & Residence Fees</i> | |
| Tuition & Books | actual cost (max. \$10,000.00 tuition per year) |
| Meal Plans | actual cost |
| Residence Fees | actual cost |

Application for Post-Secondary Education Assistance

() New Student

() Returning Student

Surname

Given Name(s)

Date of Birth

Student ID Number

Mailing Address

Band Number

Phone

Email address

University or Education Institution

Degree, Diploma, or Certificate Sought

Scholarship/Bursary/Other Funding

Current Year of Study

Length of Program

Please check for which you are applying:

Full Time ()

Part Time ()

Fall/Winter ()

Spring/Summer ()

A letter of acceptance from the Post Secondary Institution you will be attending and/or a copy of your previous transcript of marks must be submitted to this office before your application will be processed.

I accept the responsibility of satisfying the academic or training requirements of the Post Secondary Institution and the Board of Education and managing the education assistance in a reasonable and responsible manner. I also declare the information provided by me on the application is true and accurate. I will also inform the Board of Education of any changes to my application or student status.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Date received

By

Post-Secondary File Access Permission Form

I, _____
hereby give permission to the Wagmatcook Board of
Education to request information from my academic
file to ascertain my Program as a student at

I understand that the submission of this information is
required by the Wagmatcook Boards counselling and
financial commitment to me while I am a student.

Student's Signature

Date