MUSCOWPETUNG SAULTEAUX FIRST NATION

POST-SECONDARY STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY

Effective: May 24, 2022

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PREAMBLE

Post-secondary education is the level of training that goes beyond the high school level and is intended to develop an individual's knowledge and skills in order that he or she can function effectively in specialized occupations. Such as education and training can only be achieved through aptitude, hard work, commitment and perseverance on the part of the student.

Post-secondary funds are provided to the Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation in order to enable capable and determined students to access further training. Such resources will ensure that these students have the opportunity to receive the financial and administrative support necessary for them to reach their full potential.
Every student who successfully completes a program of post-secondary education gains knowledge and skills that enables him or her to contribute to the Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation and society at large.

Post-secondary education assistance is provided by the federal government as a way to help individuals, but such finding is not yet recognized by the federal government as a treaty right. It is important that these limited resources be used as wisely and effectively as possible.
The purpose of this policy is to help identify and support those individuals who will benefit most from post-secondary assistance.

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program is to assist students of the Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation to gain access to post-secondary education and to graduate with the qualifications and skills needed to pursue individual careers.

The Student Assistance Program provides financial assistance to eligible Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation students toward the cost of their post-secondary education.
This document outlines:

a) The criteria to be met by students in order to qualify for financial assistance.
b) The types and maximum levels of support available through the Student Assistance Program.
c) The maximum duration of assistance that may be provided with respect to various levels of post-secondary education.

This policy is effective January 1, 2002 and will apply to all subsequent student applications.

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SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS

"**Treaty/Status Indian**" means a person whose name has been entered in the Indian Register in accordance with the Indian Act and/or a person recognized as possessing band membership status in Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation.

"**Full-Time Student**" means, according to the MSN PSSSP is a student who is registered in 8 courses/24 credits in an academic year.

"**Mature Student**" is defined as a person over the age of 19 years, who has not completed the regular grad 12 requirements and who has been out of the educational system for a significant period of time. The student, by virtue of life experience, must demonstrate a readiness to successfully undertake post-secondary studies.

"**MSN**" is an acronym which refers to the Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation.

"**Post-Secondary Education**" means a program of studies offered by a post-secondary institution for which completion of secondary school studies or its equivalent is a prerequisite.

"**Program of Studies**" includes all accredited post-secondary programs, leading to certificate, diploma or degree. Programs may include prerequisites to post-secondary programs such as pre-law, pre-med, and preparatory programs (UEP), and are less than one academic year in duration.

"**Public Institutions**" are Canadian or Foreign post-secondary institutions which receive the majority of their funding from Federal or Provincial Governments.

"**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 programs by arrangement with a post-secondary institution (MSN will maintain a national list of recognized Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions).

"**Private Post-Secondary Institutions**" are Canadian or Foreign post-secondary institutions which receive the majority of their funding from sources other than governments.

"**Academic Year**" is defined by the post-secondary institution but will not be less than eight months duration.

"**Semester**" refers to a part of the academic year, as defined by the post-secondary institution. Semesters usually cover the periods from September to December, January to April, and May to August.

"**Dependent**" refers to a child or children who is dependent upon the student.

"**PSSAP**" is an acronym that refers to the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program.

"**MSN PSSAP Coordinator**" refers to the person who is the Coordinator and has administrative responsibilities for the Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation Post-Secondary Education Program.

"**MSN PSSAP Committee**" refers to a committee made up of individuals familiar with post-secondary education who will assist the Coordinator in determining the disbursement of post-secondary funding and decision making.

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SECTION 3 – ELIGIBILITY

1. No MSN Elected Official is eligible for post-secondary funding for the duration of their elected term in office. Only tuition and books will be covered.
2. Must be a registered band member of Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation (MSN). Newly transferred band members must wait 2 years after transfer is approved to apply for funding. Once new members are eligible to apply, they must provide post-secondary funding history from previous band.
3. The student must be a member of the MSN, which includes Bill C-31 and Bill S-3 students.
4. The student must have met entrance requirements and have been accepted for enrolment in a recognized post-secondary institution for a program of studies.
3. The student must be registered in a program of six months duration that leads to a recognized certificate, diploma or degree from a Canadian post-secondary institution. Programs outside of Canada may be considered. In such cases, would be funded at a comparable program Canadian institution cost closest to the main reserve location. However, those students who are entering programs which normally have grade twelve as an entrance requirement will be given first priority.
4. Support will be provided within the limit of support available in accordance with MSN post-secondary funding arrangements. If demand for funding exceeds availability, applications will be deferred according to priority rules set out further in this policy.
5. Applications must be received by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator by the deadline dates set out under Student Applications.

SECTION 4 – STUDENT APPLICATIONS

POLICY

The MSN PSSAP provides financial support to eligible Treaty/Status Indians of the MSN towards the costs of their post-secondary education. Sponsorship will be provided pending availability of resources.

PROCEDURES

1. Application Requirements

Applications for financial support received by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator must include a minimum:

a) STATUS CARD VERIFICATION (photocopy of card) or ISC Letter of Status or Band Membership Verification Letter of Status
b) INSTITUTE ACCEPTANCE (copy of letter of acceptance from the institution)
c) DEPENDENT VERIFICATION (copy of Revenue Canada Child Tax Form)

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d) FINAL REGISTRATION (official form from institution listing classes in which you will be enrolled)

e) TRACKING SHEET OF CLASSES (upon approval of funding and with the assistance of an academic counsellor, the student should have a list of courses required to complete your (DEGREE, CERTIFICATE, OR DIPLOMA)

f) MOST RECENT GRADE TRANSCRIPT

g) GRADE 12 HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT or GED/ABE 12 TRANSCRIPT – applicable to new students

h) PROGRAM INFORMATION (verification that program has entrance requirement level of grade 12 or GED/ABE 12 and is eight (8) months in length. MSN PSSAP does not normally fund during the spring/summer session)

i) CONSENT TO RELEASE form signed

j) INSTITUTION'S AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION TO A THIRD-PARTY FORM Institution's form for Authorization to Release Information to a Third Party, signed and submitted to Institution. MSN PSSAP Coordinator must be cc'd in the email communication.

l) VALID EMAIL ADDRESS that is checked regularly. The Coordinator communicates preferably via email.

The MSN PSSAP Coordinator must verify the applicant's status number with the Department of Indian Affairs or the Band's Indian Registry.

Applications will be date stamped upon receipt.

The student is responsible for ensuring that applications and all necessary accompanying documents are properly and fully filled out. The MSN PSSAP Coordinator will provide advice whenever possible.

2. Application Process and Deadlines

Students are responsible to apply for admission to the academic institution. Students requiring financial assistance will apply for funding directly through the MSN PSSAP Coordinator.

New students will be expected to complete a MSN PSSAP application form for Post-Secondary Educational Assistance and provide the necessary documentation to complete the application process.

Continuing students must complete an application for the fall semester (every September) for the duration of their studies, as well as, providing their updated registration forms.

Upon application, students will sign a "Release of Information" statement allowing the MFN PSSAP Coordinator the right to access the student's academic information from the Registrar's Office of the respective post-secondary institutions. Also, they must sign and submit to the Institutions' Authorization to Release Information to a Third Party.

Decisions regarding disbursement of post-secondary funding to applicants will be made by the MSN PSSAP Committee in consultation with the MSN PSSAP Coordinator.

Applications are to be sent to: Preferred: Angela.Pratt@muscowpetung.com **OR**

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Mailed to:

Post-Secondary Coordinator
Muscowpetung Saulteaux First Nation
Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program
P.O. Box 1310
Fort Qu'Appelle, SK S0G 1S0

Or faxed to the above at (306) 723-4710

Telephone: (306) 723-4747 Toll Free: 1-866-848-4747

3. **Date of Application Deadline**

FOR FALL SEMESTER
May 31 – send out continuing applications for fall
June 30 – Deadline date for New/Continuing Applications/documents required
July 15 – Applications new/continuing will be reviewed for funding
Aug 31 – Send out student/institute sponsorship for fall

Applications received after above deadline will be held until it can be determined if funds are available.

4. **Determining the Amount of Support**

The amount of support for each applicant will be calculated and recorded on that part of the application form designated for MSN PSSAP. Calculations will be made as follows:

- Tuition — As per institution
- Single person — $1,500/month
- Student with dependents — $2,000/month

Approved full-time students will have bookstore arrangements made at your institution.

5. After the MSN PSSAP Committee has met and an application is approved or rejected, applicants will be informed within a reasonable amount of time.

SECTION 5 – FUNDING CONDITIONS

1. **Funding will be provided to the student when:**

a) The application is complete;
b) All documentation is provided;
c) The application is approved;
d) The MSN PSSAP Coordinator establishes a monthly schedule of payments to the students and makes appropriate arrangements to disburse funds accordingly.

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2. MSN PSSAP will suspend payments:

a) On notice from the student that he/she has dropped out of the program of studies , or;
b) If the student fails, on request, to verify that he/she is continuing in the program of studies;
c) If the student has been required to discontinue from their institution of study;
d) If the student becomes less than full-time (12 credit hours) as defined by the MSN PSSAP policy; 1st year students may be allowed a reduction to 3 classes at 9 credit hours for their 1st and 2nd semester.
e) If the student has not met the mark standards as outlined in the MSN PSSAP Policy.
    i. First year student – 55% in classes taken
    ii. Subsequent years – 60% in all courses or program required Grade Point Average (GPA)
    iii. Any student in a degree program will not be funded for more than 5 years
    iv. Any student who fails a majority of classes in one semester/term will not be eligible to apply for sponsorship for one year.

3. Repayments

MSN PSSAP may take action to reclaim funds provided to a student who has withdrawn from studies and continued to receive support. The monthly student allowance, tuition, books, etc. overpayment will be calculated from date of withdrawal. Repayments will be made through Student Living Allowance reductions until the overpayment has been cleared or recollected with satisfactory arrangements.

SECTION 6 – SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR FULL-TIME STUDENTS

1. Tuition/Textbook Support

Includes students' fees for registration, tuition, tutorials, initial professional certification and examination fees, and the cost of books and supplies which are listed as required by the post-secondary institution. Application fees will be reimbursed to students upon acceptance and commencement of training program, receipts will be required.

Tuition/Textbook Support provided for:

a) Students attending Canadian public institutions at the normal rate charged by the institution for a Canadian student.
b) Students attending foreign post-secondary institutions will be paid at the amount equivalent to that charged by the nearest post-secondary Canadian institution nearest to the reserve which offers a comparable program.
c) Subject to section b above, students who are enrolled in a foreign institution will be paid a regular monthly allowance rate in Canadian funds.
d) Residency Clause – students are encouraged to attend an institution in the province they reside in order to save resources. Tuition/books will be paid according to the rates of their normal place of residence.

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2. Living Expenses

The support for living expenses is to be applied toward all normal daily living costs such as food, shelter, utilities, daycare, and personal expenses.

3. Special Needs Students

All universities provide a supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with special needs. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the services provided for special needs students.

4. Graduation Incentives

Funding provisions will be made within MSN PSSAP to provide assistance an incentive upon graduation. Short-term professional development type programs are not eligible.

a)	Certificate	6 months to < 1 year	$250
		1 year	$350
	**If a 2-year program, not eligible for 1 year incentive*		
b)	Diploma	2 year	$500
c)	Degree (*one time only, not per degree*)	4 year	$1000
d)	Masters/Doctorate (one time only)		$1000
e)	Grade 12, regular, ABE		$500
f)	GED		$150

SECTION 7 – PART-TIME STUDENTS

1. Tuition/Textbook Support

When a student in attendance at a post-secondary institution class registration is less than 12 credit hours (*or the equivalency to 12 credit hours determined by the MSN's closest post-secondary institution the University of Regina*) at the student's choice of institution, the student will be eligible for assistance to pay for required textbooks, supplies and tuition fees. They are not eligible for a monthly student living allowance. Students enrolled in correspondence or other distant education courses will qualify for required textbooks, supplies and tuition fees.

2. Living Expenses

No living expenses will be provided to students who are in attendance for part-time programs.

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SECTION 8 – LIMITS OF SUPPORT

1. Support for post-secondary education expenses will be provided at four levels of post-secondary education. Limits will be placed on duration of support according to the level of program the student is enrolled.

Level I	Community College/Technical
Level II	Undergraduate Programs, eg. BA, BEd, BSci
Level III	Professional Programs eg. MD, LLB
Level IV	Graduate Programs eg. Masters, PhD (depending on program and institution, to be dealt with on an individual basis. Max 16 months – MA; Max 24 months – PhD) unless otherwise approved by the PSSAP Committee.

2. Normally, duration of assistance Level I to IV will be in accordance with the regular full-time requirements of the institution.

3. Students who transfer programs more than once require approval of the MSN PSSAP Committee prior to approval for additional funding.

SECTION 9 – ACCOUNTABILITY OF STUDENTS

1. Every effort will be made by the MSN PSSAP to recover overpayments by students who misuse funding by not fulfilling the terms of the PSSAP, or who misrepresent their marital, dependent or program status on application or required documentation. A letter will be sent to the student with information concerning the situation and all funding will be determined.

2. Students will be responsible for repaying costs to MSN PSSAP for any classes from which they withdrew for reasons other than a certified medical reason. These medical reasons must be accepted by the institutions they attend. Students that withdraw due to a medical reason must submit a medical note from the same physician to return to classes. See #4.

3. Any overpayments of living allowance, tuition, and books will be deducted from the monthly allowance before the end of the present term or by a repayment schedule approved by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator/Committee.

4. A medical withdrawal applies to all classes in which the student has registered for that term. Students with complete medical withdrawals will be required to sit out the next consecutive term and will require a medical letter confirming their health status prior to registering for the next semester. See #2.

5. Upon submission of medical documentation, students may be granted one medical leave during their post-secondary program. Only in exceptional circumstances shall requests for further medical leave be considered.

6. When misuse of post-secondary funds is discovered, the MSN PSSAP Coordinator/Committee will adopt the following procedures.

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a) Write a letter to the individual stating the findings
b) If the student is, in fact, found to have misused funding, the MSN PSSAP Coordinator/Committee will suspend that student from further funding or take other corrective action
c) Arrangements, satisfactory to MSN PSSAP Coordinator/Committee, for repayment by the student of overpayment received, will be a condition of any future funding.

Misuse of funds includes the following types of Lack of Academic Performance:

Fail: Any student who fails a majority of classes within one semester may be expected to repay the costs of the courses and may be required to discontinue for the next academic year.

No Paper: Students who receive a final mark of "No Paper" will be expected to repay the cost of the courses.

Withdrawals: Students who withdraw from a class for reasons other than medical without prior consultation and approval from the MSN PSSAP Coordinator/Committee will pay the class drop fees. Students considering medical withdrawals will consult the MSN PSSAP Coordinator prior to requesting a medical withdrawal from the institution.

Incompletes: Students with an excessive number of incompletes may be reviewed by the MSN PSSAP Committee to determine eligibility of continued funding.

7. Non-payments

Students who fail to repay funds to which they are liable to the MSN PSSAP will no longer be eligible for student support from the MSN PSSAP. The student's file will notate the overpayment until that overpayment is recovered.

8. The MSN PSSAP Coordinator will be responsible for keeping an updated student registry listing the student's name, institution, program, support provided and any required additional information. Information regarding the student's academic records will be kept confidential and will be released to be the MSN PSSAP Committee only when required if conflict arises.

9. Student Monitoring Procedures

a) Students will be responsible for submitting any necessary documentation requested by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator. Students will provide documents such as "Confirmation of Enrollment" and "Class Add/Drops" to the MSN PSSAP Coordinator. Students will also provide copies of their "Official Student Grades" to the MSN PSSAP Coordinator at the end of each semester as soon as possible after students receive them.

b) Students will report and provide any letters of warning (ie. Required to Discontinue) that are received from the academic institutions. Students who are required to discontinue from one institution are deemed to be required to discontinue from all institutions for the duration of the original "Required to Discontinue". Students are eligible to reapply for funding to any eligible

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institution/program once the original "Required to Discontinue" has been lifted. Students will be required to consult the MSN PSSAP Coordinator prior to repeating classes in order to increase their grade point average. Students who exhibit consistent poor performance will be reviewed by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator and Committee.

10. Students are advised to Opt-Out of any Health and Dental and U-Pass fees that the institution charges. **These fees are the student's responsibility.** Registered status Indians have their health coverage covered by Indigenous Services Canada. Generally, students can opt-out of U-Pass fees if they do not reside in the institution's city. Finding out this information and following through with opting-out is the responsibility of the student.

SECTION 10 – APPEALS

Every student has a right to reasonably appeal an educational decision regarding funding or other decision made by the MSN PSSAP Coordinator or Committee within 30 days of date of letter, with the exception of cases where funding has been refused because funds are fully committed. The appeal process is as follows:

1. Appeal Process

a) Written notification from the student to the MSN PSSAP Coordinator of the student's "Intent to Appeal", which will include the following:
   i. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and Institution attended and Program of Studies the student is enrolled in.
   ii. Reason for the appeal; cite relevant section(s) of Policy Guidelines.
b) The MSN PSSAP Coordinator will schedule an appeal hearing and call to assembly, the MSN PSSAP Committee, a MSN Band Councillor(s) who hold the Post-Secondary Education portfolio and one to three external post-secondary coordinators from other bands. The appellant has the right to attend the appeal hearing in person or send a designate.
c) The appeal will be heard at the meeting of the MSN PSSAP Committee in a timely manner.
d) The Appeal Board will reach a decision based on MSN PSSAP policy, documentation, and information presented on behalf of the student.
e) The student will be notified in writing of the Appeal Board's decision.
f) The decision of the Appeal Board is final and binding upon both parties.

SECTION 11 – PRIORITY CATEGORIES

1. All students seeking post-secondary funding must apply by the deadline dates as outlined under Dates of Application.

Approval of application for student funding will be based on the following criteria:

Group 1

a) Continuing students will be funded up to the completion of one degree. Priority funding will be granted to those closest to completing their program.

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b) Regular Grade 12 and Adult Basic Education (ABE 12) graduates fully accepted into post-secondary programs and received their credentials within the last three years.
c) Students who have funded themselves for one full academic year and demonstrated acceptable academic performance.
d) Grade Equivalency Diploma (GED) students fully accepted into applying to University or College for the first time and received their credentials within the year.

NOTE: STUDENTS MUST HAVE REGISTERED IN FULL-TIME (at least 8 courses/24 credit hours*) FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR THIS CATEGORY.

Group 2

a) Students returning to the *same* program after a leave of absence due to reasons other than being "Required to Discontinue" (RTD).
b) Students returning to a *different* program after a leave of a leave of absence due to reasons other than RTD.
c) Students seeking a second degree or professional degree. Only tuition and books will be provided.
d) Students who have previously graduated from an accredited private post-secondary institution.
e) Continuing students who transfer from an accredited university or technical college to an accredited private post-secondary institute during their funding.

NOTE: CONTINUING STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER TO A PRIVATE INSTITUTE WILL HAVE A TUITION LIMIT BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS PREVIOUSLY ALLOCATED AND COMPARABLE PROGRAM AND COST OF THE NEAREST POST SECONDARY INSTITUTION TO THE RESERVE. THE ORIGINAL APPLICATION WILL ALSO BE USED TO DETERMINE THE LENGTH OF TIME A STUDENT IS TO BE FURTHER FUNDED.

Group 3

a) Students who were required to discontinue and who have been re-admitted by the institution will be responsible for the first term tuition and books. Upon successful completion of Term 1, re-instating living allowance funding will be considered by the PSSAP Committee and based on budget availability.
b) Mature students who have been accepted into an accredited post-secondary institution after being out of the educational system for several years will be funded dependent upon availability of resources.

NOTE: STUDENTS WITH OUTSTANDING REPAYMENTS WILL BE PLACED LOWER WITHIN THEIR APPROPRIATE GROUP. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO DEMONSTRATE SUPERIOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND COMMITMENT TO COMPLETING THEIR STUDIES.

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FINAL AUTHORITY AND AMENDMENTS

The Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation Chief and Council retain the final authority over this Post-Secondary Education Policy. Any exceptions, amendments, or decisions involving special circumstances will be made at the discretion of Chief and Council. This policy may be reviewed and updated as deemed necessary to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the Nation and its members.

We, the duly elected Chief and Council of the Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation, hereby acknowledge and approve the Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation Post-Secondary Education Policy. This policy shall come into effect as of the date indicated below and shall remain in force until amended or repealed at the discretion of Chief and Council.

Approved on this ____ day of _____, _____.

Quorum _____4_____

(Chief) MELISSA TAVITA

(Councillor) THOMAS PRATT

(Councillor) BYRON TOTO

(Councillor) BARRY CAPPO

(Councillor) RHONDA ROSEBLUFF

(Councillor) TERENCE CAPPO

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