

## VUNTUT GWITCHIN FIRST NATION EDUCATION POLICY

### **A. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Citizens who wish to further their education in the academic, developmental studies or post secondary field.

### **B. POLICY STATEMENT**

The creation of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Policy comes from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation's increasing efforts to provide its citizens with an education policy that is open, easily accessible and meets the needs of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and its citizens who are interested in furthering their Education.

### **C. PURPOSE**

The Policy is meant to maintain and establish consistent allocation standards for Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who are accessing funding resources to further their education through this policy.

The Policy is meant to encourage and assist Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens to pursue upgrading/developmental studies in order to gain admission into post secondary studies or to pursue additional education in a post secondary field in a career of their choice.

The Policy is meant to encourage Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens to upgrade their qualifications and skills at a post secondary institute in order to pursue individual careers, to contribute to the achievement of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Self-Government, and assist in pursuing the individuals' economic self-reliance.

### **D. DEFINITIONS**

**Education Policy** outlined in this document is defined as the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Policy adopted by Chief and Council and administered by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Department.

**Student** outlined in this policy is defined as a Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Citizen who is enrolled in a recognized education facility to upgrade or further their education to obtain a certificate, diploma, or degree at College, Vocational School, Trade School, or University.

**Mature Student** outlined in this policy means a person who has been out of school for a number of years and is going back to further their education. The mature student must be at least twenty (20) years of age.

**Full-Time Student** outlined in this policy is a person enrolled in three (3) or more courses per semester or enrolled full-time as designated by the education facility the student is attending.

**Part-Time Student** outlined in this policy means enrolled in two (2) or less courses per semester unless otherwise designated by the education facility the student is attending.

**Academic Level** outlined in this policy is a student who is entering an education facility for the purpose of upgrading their education to a school equivalency level or in order to further their education in a post secondary field.

**Post Secondary Student** outlined in this policy is a person enrolled for a minimum of eight (8) months in an education facility (e.g. Vocational School, Trade School, College or University) in order to obtain a Certificate, Diploma or Degree in a field of their choice. For example, a student attempting to obtain a Certificate, Diploma, or Degree in the Mechanic, Hair Design, Secretarial/Administrative, Electrical, Construction, Surveying, Business Administration, Computer Technician, Bachelor of Commerce or Science, Law, Engineering, Social Services or Education field.

**Education Facility** in this policy refers to an educational institute/facility such as a Vocational or Trade School, College, University or any other recognized accepted institute that the student can obtain their academic upgrading skills or a Post Secondary Education Certificate, Diploma or University Degree.

**Tuition** outlined in this policy includes fees for registration in order to take the program set by the education facility. Note that this does not include the cost of books and supplies. Or University/ Student fees.

**Chief** outlined in this policy is the person who is elected as Chief by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens.

**Council or Councilors** outlined in this policy are those individuals elected to Council by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens.

**Education Committee** outlined in this policy are those individuals appointed to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Committee by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief and Council.

**Executive Director** outlined in this policy is the person hired as the Executive Director for the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation by Chief and Council.

**Yukon Region** outlined in this policy includes all Yukon communities including Inuvik, NWT

### **E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief and Council:**

The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief and Council shall:

Ensure the Education Policy is fair and beneficial to all Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who wish to pursue their education;

Oversee the general administration of the policy and ensure the policy is adhered to;

Appoint an Education Committee composed of five (5) individuals (known as members at large) and at least one Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation employee.

Hear all appeals and make the final decisions;

Meet with the Education Committee and Executive Director a minimum of three (3) times per year to review and consider any recommendations, revisions, suggestions, suggestions, or reports made to them. One meeting shall take place between the Winter & Fall semesters.

#### **The Education Committee:**

The Education Committee consists of five (5) individuals at large appointed by Chief and Council and at least one employee of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, which will include the Education Coordinator. The Members at large shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years).

#### **The Education Committee shall:**

Appoint one (1) member of the Education Committee as the Chairperson and have the Education Coordinator act as the committee; All persons have voting rights except the Education Coordinator. The Education Committee shall strive to reach consensus. The Chairperson may vote to break a tie vote.  
Meet once per month, or as required, to perform and administer the roles and responsibilities outlined in this policy;  
Form sub committees as needed;  
Review and make recommendations for improvements and changes to the policy, in the administration, funding allocations and other issues regarding the programs to the Chief and Council;  
Implement the policy under the direction of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Executive Director, and Chief and Council;  
Prepare necessary policy and program recommendations, reports (I.e funding applications, operations, annual reports) and other written or oral submissions for the Chairperson to present to the Chief and Council for review a minimum of three (3) times per year;  
Review all incoming applications to ensure they meet the specified criteria in the policy and to ensure an equitable distribution of funding;  
Determine the most suitable applicants are chosen for Financial Assistance or Scholarships based on the criteria of the policy;  
The Education Committee shall review and recommend funding levels at a minimum of once per year or as required throughout the year.  
Ensure successful applicants follow the requirements of the policy;  
Maintain the confidentiality of applicants.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will consider applications for various needs for the following:

2 years for Masters  
2+ years for PHD

Normally students are required to take and complete their College Prep Courses in the community of Old Crow if possible. At the discretion of the Educational Committee this requirement may be waived. The funding available for upgrading academic skills will normally not exceed two (2) semesters or one (1) year. At the discretion of the Education Committee this may be extended to a maximum of two (2) years.

**The Chairperson:**

The Chairperson shall call the meeting if there is a quorum (3 members) is present.  
Shall coordinate the meetings and ensuring they are conducted in a proper manner;  
Shall ensure minutes are kept of all meetings;  
Shall ensure all applications are properly processed;  
Shall ensure applicants are informed of the Education Committee's decisions within seven (7) days of any decisions being made;  
Presenting recommendations to Chief and Council adopted by Education Committee members;  
Preparing necessary policies, reports and other written or oral submissions that were approved by the Education Committee for review by Chief and Councils;  
Attending all appeal hearings, representing the Education Committee's decision and making recommendations to Chief and Council.

**The Education Coordinator:**

Acting as the contact person for the Education Committee;  
Prepare an agenda prior to each meeting and ensuring that each Education Committee member has a copy of the minutes and agenda prior to the start of each meeting;  
Recording minutes at the committee meetings and following up on action items from the meetings;  
Ensure Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens are aware of meetings times, places and dates;  
Assist the Chairperson in the preparing of policies, reports and other written submissions for Chief and Council's review.

**F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Education Committee Members who are relatives of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens applying for funding through the Education Policy with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation shall declare a conflict of interest. The member will excuse him or herself from any discussions regarding the candidates' application and will not take part in the decision being made regarding the application.

**FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

Students are encouraged to seek funding from other funding agencies. The amount of Financial Assistance or Scholarships awarded will depend on the funding available. Where possible, some funding will be provided by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation organization. All funding available whether Financial Assistance or Scholarships, will be awarded at the discretion of the Education Committee, as per the Education Policy guidelines. The Education Committee shall cap funding based on availability of funding.

**NATURE OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND GENERAL CRITERIA**

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens can apply for straight Financial Assistance, Scholarships or both under this policy. Scholarships will only be awarded provided a student is entering into a field of post secondary education as outlined in section D- Definitions.

To be considered for financial assistance under the Education Policy, the student must be a member off the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation First Nation's Final Agreement and shall be accepted into a recognized course of study at a recognized educational facility.

Students will be eligible for financial assistance starting from the date on their letter of intent.  
The duration of financial assistance will be in accordance with the official length of the program that the student are enrolled in as defined by the education facility the student is attending.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will fund a student in a field of study for the following years:

2 years for Developmental Studies  
2 years for College Prep  
5 years for College/University

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will consider applications for various needs for the following:

2 years for Masters  
2 + years for PHD

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The amount of assistance allocated to an individual is at the discretion of the Education Committee and is dependent upon the funding available and the applicant's demonstrated need.

The maximum allowance paid to full-time students may vary according to the funding available, the number of dependants, and the individual needs.

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>MONTHLY RATES</u>
Single student living with an employed parent	\$490.00
Single student no dependents	\$875.00
Married with an employed spouse	\$875.00
with one (1) dependent	\$1050.00
with two (2) dependents	\$1,230.00
with three (3) dependents	\$1,405.00
Married student with dependent spouse	\$ 1095.00
with one (1) dependent	\$1,245.00
with two (2) dependents	\$1,505.00
with three (3) dependents	\$1,705.00
Single parent with one (1) dependent	\$1,245.00
two (2) dependent	\$1,505.00
three (3) dependents	\$1,705.00

### VGFN TOP-UP FUNDING

<u>Category</u>	<u>Monthly Rate</u>
Single/Living at Home	\$200.00
Student with 1 Dependant	\$250.00
Student with 2 Dependents	\$300.00
Student with 3 Dependents	\$350.00
Student with 4 or more Dependents	\$400.00

**Funding assistance** listed above is the maximum allowed for full time students. All financial assistance provided is dependent on the funds available to the Education Committee and an assessment of the financial need of the applicant.

Financial assistance under this section I, does not apply to part time students.

**Tuition**-Once approved a letter will be sent to your institution advising them to invoice Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for your tuition costs. Tuition fee approved is the cost per credit course + lab fee + activity/registration fee. All Other fees required by the institute are your responsibility.

**Travel**-Students in Post Secondary fields of study will receive \$1000 per year if studying in the Yukon Region and \$2000.00 per year if studying outside of the Yukon for travel expenses and an additional \$1000 per year if traveling out of Old Crow. The travel amount will be issued in August and December.

**Books & Supplies**-A fixed rate of \$500 is provided to all students for the Fall and Winter Semesters. A cheque will be provided to students studying outside the Yukon. Once approved a letter will be sent to your institution advising them to invoice Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for your books & supplies. This rate will not be increased throughout the school year and is not based on submission of receipts.

**Living Allowance & Top Up Funding:** (if eligible) is the amount provided is based upon marital status, dependants, full time student, and part time student listed on application. Providing you supply your TD account number, your funds will be deposited on the first day of each month. For students without a TD account, cheques will be mailed on the first week of each month. Funding for the final month of study will be assessed when completion date is available. If date of completion is before the 15th day of the final month of studies then the student will be funded 50% of the living allowance for that month. If the students completion date is after the 15th day of the final month then the student will be funded 100% of their living allowance for that month.

### J. CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: THRU AHRDA

Students entering into an education facility in order to enroll for upgrade their trade skills may be eligible for financial assistance providing they meet the following criteria:

The clientele who are eligible to apply for assistance under the AHRDA/CYFN program and who are to be served by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation under its program shall include:

- a) All citizens or members of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation who reside in the Yukon Territory and,
- b) All other Aboriginal persons, including Inuit, Metis, and members of other First Nations regardless of their status under the Indian Act, who are residing in the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation community, (Old Crow).

The student must be accepted or enrolled in a recognized educational facility .A letter from the education facility that states the student can obtain the necessary qualifications within a period of one (1) year, or the length of time required, and for what reason if the period exceeds the one (1) year allotted;

Students must maintain a minimum grade average equivalent to 65% or better to continue to be eligible for assistance;

#### Short Term Courses:

- a) Workshop Training 1-5 days long
  - Courses must be taken in place of residence if available.

- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will cover books and tuition only.
- Accommodations will be funded if necessary.
- Travel allowance will be funded if necessary.
- Living allowance will be available if necessary

b) Trades Training Minimum of 20 hrs. to 6 weeks

- Courses must be taken in place of residence if available.
- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will cover books and tuition only.
- Accommodations will be funded if necessary.
- Travel allowance will be funded if necessary.
- Living allowance will be available if necessary.

Criteria: for workshops and trades training:

If workshop is required for current employment.

If workshop is needed for advancement in current employment.

If workshop training increases one's ability to be employed.=

Priority shall be given to those students who demonstrate the greatest need for financial assistance and who meet the criteria outlined above.

For Students entering an education facility for post secondary studies:  
Students will be required to pay 20% course fees.

#### **K. DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES/UPGRADING—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The amount of assistance allocated to an individual is at the discretion of the Education Committee and is dependent upon the funding available and the applicant's demonstrated need.

The maximum allowance paid to students that wish to upgrade may vary according to the funding available, the number of dependents, and the individual needs.

Financial Assistance funding may be given is as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Monthly Rate</b>
Single/Living at Home	\$640.00
Student with 1 Dependant	\$690.00
Student with 2 Dependents	\$740.00
Student with 3 Dependents	\$790.00
Student with 4 or more Dependents	\$840.00

Financial assistance listed above is the maximum allowed for full time students entering into developmental students/upgrading.

Financial assistance under this section 1, does not apply to part time students

**Travel** for students wishing to pursue development studies/upgrading will not be eligible for travel.

**Childcare**-Students may receive Child Care Top Up dollars in the amount of \$100.00 per child dependant; by contacting the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Employment & Training Officer..

**Books & Supplies**-A fixed rate of \$500 is provided to all students for the Fall and Winter Semesters, if necessary. A cheque will be provided to students studying outside the Yukon. Once approved a letter will be sent to your institution advising them to invoice Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for your books & supplies. This rate will not be increased throughout the school year and is not based on submission of receipts.

**Living Allowance**-is the amount provided is based upon marital status, dependants, full time student, and part time student listed on application. Providing you supply your TD account number, your funds will be deposited on the first day of each month. For students without a TD account, cheques will be mailed on the first week of each month. Funding for the final month of study will be assessed when completion date is available. If date of completion is before the 15th day of the final month of studies then the student will be funded 50% of the living allowance for that month. If the students completion date is after the 15th day of the final month then the student will be funded 100% of their living allowance for that month.

For students entering a educational facility for Post Secondary Studies:

The student must be accepted or enrolled in an educational facility that provides academic upgrading courses (i.e. equivalent to grade 12);

A letter from the education facility that states the student can obtain the necessary qualifications within a period of one (1) year, or the length of time required, and for what reason if the period exceeds the one (1) year allotted;

Students must maintain a minimum grade average equivalent to 65% or better to continue to be eligible for assistance;

The student must be 18 years old or out of school for one year to be considered for financial assistance;

Eligibility Criteria:

- Courses must be taken in place of residence if available.
- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will cover books and tuition only, which will be forwarded institution upon invoicing.
- Travel will not be funded.
- Living allowance will be available if needed.

to ensure funding continuity. If the average falls below this standard, the student may be allowed one additional term or semester to raise the cumulative score to the required level;

If the student fails to do so, funding will be withheld until all documents are in place and eligibility may be withdrawn.

#### **L. SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:**

If a student's attendance and progress evaluations indicate failure to fulfill his or her responsibility as a sponsored student, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Committee will take the following action:

one written warning; or email  
Cancellation of funding.

The action taken will be determined by the degree of failing to fulfill their responsibility. Recipients who are suspended or released, or who do not complete their current studies will be required to reimburse the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Fund, for the amount received and may not be considered for further assistance from any Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation organization. The Education Committee has the discretion to waive the reimbursement requirement if the recipient can justify why the course or program was not completed (i.e. medical or family reasons). The student shall inform the Education Committee in writing if he or she is suspended, released, or will not be returning for their second semester for any other reason. Students receiving funding under this policy will have their financial assistance terminated in any of the following circumstances

Unsatisfactory performance - unexcused absences, withdrawal from courses and misuse or abuse of funding;

All students are required to maintain a minimum of an overall average equivalent to 65% or better

#### **M. SCHOLARSHIPS:**

The maximum of any scholarship given in one year by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Committee to an applicant will be one thousand (\$1000) Dollars. Five scholarships will be awarded to applicants in any one year.

Scholarships available:

General Scholarship

Administration Scholarship

Natural Resource Scholarship

Health & Social Programs Scholarship

Finance Scholarship

#### **N. CRITERIA FOR SCHOLARSHIPS:**

Students entering into a Post Secondary Education to obtain a certificate, diploma, or degree in the field of their choice may be eligible for a scholarship providing they meet the following criteria:

The awarding of a scholarship will be based on satisfactory academic performance,

Scholarships will be awarded to those students who have an overall grade point average equivalent to 75% or better;

Applicants must be considered a full time student to be eligible for a scholarship.

Scholarships will be awarded in January of each year.

#### **O. STUDENT APPLICATIONS:**

- If requested, and where possible, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Coordinator will assist Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens in applying for funding under the Education Policy and for alternate or additional funding from external sources or organizations.
- Application forms shall be available from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Education Office. or at [www.oldercrow.ca](http://www.oldercrow.ca).
- All funding requests under the Education Policy (Financial or Scholarships) must be submitted in writing to the Education Coordinator prior to the appointed deadline of December 31..

#### **In order to be considered all applications must contain the following documents:**

An Official Transcript for the applicant's last period of study. If the applicant is applying for funding for the first time, is considered a mature student and has been accepted to an education facility in order to upgrade his/her academic skills (i.e. grade 12), the Education Committee may waive this requirement at their discretion. The Education Committee will only waive this requirement provided the applicant has tried to obtain his or her last Official Transcript and was unable to do so. In this case, it will be the applicant's responsibility to request this requirement be waived and provide reasons why.

A confirmation letter of acceptance from the educational facility the applicant will be attending, stating the current year enrollment and what diploma, certificate, or degree will be obtained upon completion of the course or program.

A statement of intent - which states who you are, which courses or program you are enrolled in, why you are taking these courses or programs, what you hope to accomplish, the benefits to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation or to yourself from your taking such studies, and future career plans;

Application forms that are incomplete or do not have the necessary information attached will not be considered..

#### **P. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:**

\* All Information must be received prior to the below deadlines

May 15th – Yukon College Application deadline

-- Early deadline for institutions outside the Yukon

June 15th – final deadline for applications from outside the Yukon

November 15th – for students starting their studies in January

**Late applications will be deferred to the next deadline date.**

**Q. APPEALS OF DECISIONS:**

Should an applicant disagree with the Education Committee's decision, he or she has the right to appeal the decision to Council. The appeal procedure will be strictly adhered to and is as follows:

The appeal must be in writing;

The appeal must outline the reason for appealing, state where the Education Committee did not follow the Education Policy, and suggest a resolution;

The appeal must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Education Committee no later than 14 days from the date the candidate was notified of the Committee's decision;

The applicant will be notified of when Council will hear his or her appeal. Should the applicant choose not to attend the appeal hearing, or is unable to attend for whatever reason, Council will make their decision based on the information before them;  
Where possible, all appeal hearings will be held within fourteen (14) days of receiving the appeal;

Council will respond to all appeals in writing of their decision within seven (7) days of hearing the appeal.  
All the decisions of the chief and Council shall be final