

Post-Secondary Student Support Program Policy Handbook

Gitwangak Education Society

Revised November 2015

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DEFINITIONS

“**Academic year**” normally means two consecutive semesters of study, the first beginning in September of a calendar year (the fall semester), and the second beginning in January of the following calendar year (the winter semester). See also “Study Period”

“**Academic Probation**” refers to the process whereby a student is given one semester to improve his/her marks before funding is suspended.

“**Appeal**” refers to the process whereby an applicant who has been refused or a student who has been terminated may seek a review of the decision.

“**Applicant**” refers to a Gitwangak Band Member applying for post-secondary funding.

“**Application Package**” refers to the two forms the applicant must submit in order to be considered for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program. The forms to be submitted include the **Application Form**, **Student Contract** and the **Program course outline**. Other items to be attached to the application package include the school’s **Letter of Acceptance**, **all Student Transcripts**, the student’s **Letter of Intent** and **both sides of their status card**.

“**Band**” has the same meaning as defined in the Indian Act. In this document, it refers to the Gitwangak Education Society.

“**Band Member**” refers to a person registered on the Gitwangak Band List, is on the Gitwangak Band Membership list and has a Status Card. The person may reside on the Gitwangak Band (where Band affairs are administered) or in another First Nations reserve, or off-reserve.

“**Bursaries**” are financial awards available to applying students. Some bursaries are only available to certain defined groups (such as women or Aboriginals). Sources include governments, educational institutions, and private foundations or individuals.

“**Canadian Public Institution**” is a post-secondary institution, which receives the majority of its funding from federal and provincial governments.

“**CCTV**” refers to Closed Circuit Television for visually impaired and students who are blind.

“**Certificate**” is the credential granted for a one-year or two semester program.

“College or UCEP Preparation” refers to programs that prepare students for enrolment in a post-secondary program. Funding for college prep/UCEP (university/college entrance program) is limited to a maximum of ten months.

“Common-law” means a relationship according to the following conditions:

- Two people living together in a marriage-like relationship, and;
- The two people have been living together for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the start of their application.

“Community College” is a public post-secondary institution that awards certificates and diplomas and that generally serves a defined geographic area.

“Course load” refers to the number of courses or credit hours a student is enrolled in per semester. Based on the standard 3 credit hour courses, the minimum course load required in the Gitwangak Education Society Post-Secondary Support Program is 4 courses (12 credit hours per semester), excluding students with designated special needs or permanent disability.

“Degree” is the credential granted for Associate (2 years), Bachelors (4 or 5 years total), Master’s (additional 2 years for a total of 6 to 7 years), or Doctoral (PHD) programs (additional 2 years for a total of 8 to 9 years). Master’s and Doctoral programs cannot be taken in conjunction with another degree program, there must be a period of two years in between before applying for Masters or Doctoral program.

“Dependant” means a person who is dependant (as defined by Revenue Canada) upon the student. To be eligible, a dependant must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The student’s and/or spouse’s children less than 19 years of age as of the start of classes, for whom the student and/or spouse have custody or provides care for the majority of time; and declared on income tax return.
- The student’s and/or spouse’s children who have permanent disabilities who are age 19 or over and are fully supported by the student and/or spouse and declared on the student’s and/or spouse’s income tax return; or
- The student’s and/or spouse’s foster children; or

- The student's and/or spouse's elderly relatives who are fully supported and claimed on the student's and/or spouse's income tax return.

“Dependant Spouse” means a person who is married to the student or has lived with the student in a common-law relationship for at least one year prior to application for educational support, and does not receive income in excess of the level of income allowed for a dependant spouse by Revenue Canada.

“Diploma” is the credential granted for a two-year program (at least four semesters).

“Education Administrative Assistant” refers to the person designated by the Gitwangak Education Society to be in charge of handling post-secondary applications.

“Education Administrator” refers to Gitwangak Education Society chief administrative officer and is responsible for overseeing the Education Administrative Officer.

“Education Affiliate” refers to educational institutions who are affiliated by arrangement with eligible post-secondary institutions delivering post-secondary programs.

“Education Institution” means a community college, university-college, institute, university, recognized by the province, granting certificate Diploma; and/or Degrees.

“Fraud” means a deliberate act of misrepresentation by the student regarding academic or financial disclosure.

“Full Time Student” refers to a student who carries a four (4) course minimum or 12 credit courses. A student with designated disabilities and students with permanent disabilities may carry two (2) course minimum or 6 credit courses.

“Funding Period” refers to the total duration of study, in terms of semesters or academic years that an applicant may receive funding, dependent on the nature of the educational program in which the applicant will be enrolled.

“Incentives” providing that funding is available is provided to students twice a year for students maintaining a 3.0 grade point average or higher.

“Institute” means an educational institution that offers particular, specialized programs not available elsewhere, generally serving a wide geographic area. Two examples include: BCIT which offer specialized trades programs, and NVIT which offers programs specifically for First Nations students.

“Spring/Summer Session” refers to the period from May to August (equivalent to one semester)

“Letter of Acceptance” refers to a letter from the educational institution indicating that the student or applicant has been accepted into an accredited program.

“Letter of Intent” refers to a brief cover letter done by the applicant as part of the completed application package, and will include the student’s long term educational and career goals, how the education program will help the student meet these goals, and a request for funding.

“Living Expenses” refers to the allowable amount of financial assistance available to the student as outlined in (See Appendix 3).

“Part-time Student” refers to a student carrying three (3) or less courses. A student with designated special needs and a student with permanent disabilities would carry one (1) course.

“Post-Secondary Student Support Program” (PSSP) refers to the post-secondary program and policy that is administered by the Gitwangak Education Society to approve band members who are attending post-secondary studies at an accredited post-secondary institute.

“Practicum” refers to on the job practical experience as part of a student’s post-secondary program.

“Program Outline” describes the courses, the course load, and the prerequisites required, as well as listing the name and phone number of the institution’s Registrar and/or contact that is included with the student’s application package.

“Private Post-Secondary Institution” is a Canadian or foreign post-secondary institution which receives the majority of its funding from sources other than governments.

“Scholarships” are financial awards available to students based on academic achievement and application. Sources include governments, educational institutions and private foundations or individuals.

“Semester” refers to a part of the academic year, as defined by the post-secondary institution, usually referring to the following three periods: September – December (Fall Semester), January – April (Winter Semester), and May – August (Spring/Summer Semester).

“Single Parent” means a student who is not living with their spouse or partner and is the primary caregiver for their children, meaning that the children are living with them the majority of the time.

“Student” for the purposes of this policy refers to a Gitwangak Education Society member who has been accepted into a post-secondary program and its sponsored by the Gitwangak Education Society’s Post-Secondary Student Support Program.

“Student Loans” refers to loans for post-secondary students under either the Federal Canada Student Loans (CSL) program and/or the provincial B.C. Student Assistance Program (BCSAP).

“Student with Designated Special Needs” refers to a student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, has a learning disability or has special gifts or talents (Ministry of Education, March 2011).

“Student with Permanent Disabilities” refers to a “functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a post-secondary” (BC Student Aid, 2013/14).

“Student Transcripts” refers to official academic transcripts of marks describing the student’s academic performance at high school, college or university. ¹

“Study Period” is the time during which a student is attending classes. The start date is the first day of classes; the end date is the month in which the final class or exam occurs, whichever is later. Normally, the study period consists of either one four-month semester or two consecutive four-month semesters. (See “academic year”).

“Support Services and Special Equipment” refers to support and equipment that student’s with designated special needs or students with permanent disabilities. Support services may include a note taker/scribe, reader, specialized tutor, interpreter/captioning, taped lectures, accommodation for exams, specialized transportation to/from school only and must be provincially approved, alternate formats such as large or Braille print. Equipment may include CCTV, recorded books, some large print books, computer with screen readers and large print systems, tape recorders and TTY/TDD.

“Termination” means the student no longer qualifies for financial support due to low academic standing, poor attendance, or failure to submit documentation to the Gitwagak Education Society, and/or fraud.

“Textbook and supplies support” refers to financial support for textbooks and supplies as dictated by the actual program requirements of educational institution.

¹ When a student is required to submit “official transcripts” and application and a small fee (usually about \$5.00) may be required by the post-secondary educational institution. Transcripts given directly to the student are often not “official transcripts.” However, some institutions may give the student one official transcript free of charge at the completion of studies. Students should not open a sealed envelope containing official transcript, because an opened transcript will not be accepted by another institution.

“**TDD**” refers to computer assisted or digital devices – telecommunication devices that make it easier for deaf and/or mute people to talk over the telephone lines.

“**Travel assistance**” refers to financial support for the student to travel between his or her normal place of residence and the educational institution if it is more than 500 km apart.

“**TTY**” refers to telephone typewriter, teletypewriter or text phone devices for students with designated special needs or permanent disabilities.

“**Tuition support**” refers to financial support for tuition and miscellaneous fees that students are required to pay according to the actual program requirements of the educational institution.

“**University-College**” means a post-secondary institution that grants certificates, diplomas, Associate degrees, and offers a limited number of (Bachelor’s) degrees in particular programs. This type of institution generally serves a wider geographic area than does a Community College.

“**University**” means a post-secondary institution that grants certificates, diplomas and degrees, including post-graduate degrees (Masters’, PhD).²

² Besides offering degree programs, the other defining feature of a university is the presence of publicly and privately funded research programs and chairs. This type of institution serves the widest geographic area; international students may make up a significant portion of the student body.

Gitwangak Education Society

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Dear Student,

Congratulations on reaching the first step of your educational goals! By now you have decided to further your education and acquire the necessary skills it takes to make your personal dream a reality.

There are two of us in the office who are here to help you reach your post-secondary goals: the Education Administration Assistant and myself. The Education Administrative Assistant is your primary contact and she will work with you to realize your post-secondary dreams. As your Education Administrator, I will be supporting the Education Administrative Assistant in her role.

The Post-Secondary Support Policy package was designed to best inform you of the sponsorship process and requirements, as well as to give you the opportunity to apply for sponsorship through the Gitwangak Education Society.

Please remember, it is up to you to decide where you want to go and who you want to become; so don't lose sight of your dreams. I encourage you to follow your career goals and we will be here to help you on your way!

If you need any assistance, or have questions about applying to a Post-Secondary institution or acquiring funding, please contact the Education Administrative Assistant or myself.

Best wishes,

Jennifer Morgan

Office Assistant, Gitwangak Education Society

e-Mail: jennifer.morgan@gitwangakeducation.ca

I. POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION VISION:

The Gitwangak Education Society will provide moral and financial support to qualifying students who attend recognized and accredited post-secondary institutions (colleges, universities and institutes). The Gitwangak Education Society believes in supporting Gitwangak Band members that will improve their academics, social and economical well-being which will not only benefit themselves but will benefit their families and our community.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE POST-SECONDARY STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM:

The primary objective of the program is to improve the employability of status Band Members by providing eligible students with access to education and skills development opportunities at the post-secondary level.

III. OVERALL PURPOSE:

The Post-Secondary Student Support Program is designed to **ASSIST** registered status band members (on and off reserve) to acquire college, university and professional qualifications to meet their future career and employment goals.

The purpose of this policy³ document is to make the Gitwangak Education Society's Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program policy explicit. The policy is designed to assist both the GES staff and prospective students in understanding the overall program and policies.

³ We acknowledge the Gitxsan Government Commission for giving us permission to use their post-secondary policy as a guide when re-writing and updating our Post-Secondary Student Support Program policy. A special thanks to Debbie Bright for developing the initial policy in 2009 and we thank Edith Loring-Kuhanga for assisting us in writing the final version of this 2013 policy.

IV. GITXSAN VALUES, CUSTOMS AND LAWS:

Education is like a long journey of learning in all aspects of life. In the Gitxsan culture, education is holistic which means that the spiritual, emotional and physical aspects are just as important as the mental aspect.

Since the Gitxsan society is a matrilineal society, children derive their experiential learning primarily from their mother's side. The primary obligations of maternal aunts and uncles to the child include nurturing, protecting and defending, grooming, guiding, advising and instructing. Although a matrilineal society, the father's side also has obligations to the children but to a lesser degree. Thus, the strength and well-being of the extended family is achieved through these maternal and paternal obligations.

We recognize that in order for our children to be successful in both worlds, our children require formal education in elementary and secondary school as well as in "higher learning" or post-secondary education.

Formal education supplements traditional learning but does not replace it. Instead, formal education is a tool that can only strengthen the individual and the Nation as a whole. Gitwangak Band members who are both educated formally and traditionally are able to assert their rights and responsibilities as well as carry on the traditional teachings of their ancestors.

V. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**1. Your rights as a Status Member of Gitwangak Band are:**

- You have a right to a quality education
- You have a right to be considered for post-secondary funding from your Band.
- You have a right to choose what career you want in life.
- You have a right to determine which accredited post-secondary institution that you want to attend.
- You have a right to a fair appeal process if you are denied funding.

Along with rights come responsibilities. As a post-secondary student, you are responsible for the outcome of your education. The following are your responsibilities to obtaining a quality post-secondary education that will help you reach your career and/or employment goals:

2. Your responsibilities are:

- Do everything possible to ensure your educational needs are being met in a positive and effective manner.
- Provide all required correspondence to the Education Administrative Assistant in a timely manner.
- Provide your current mailing address, phone number, marital status and bank information to the Education Administrative Assistant when requested.
- Notify Education Administrative Assistant of any changes in your program, marital status and address in writing.
- Provide written notice of course program withdrawal (must be before deadline).
- Maintain a full course load as outlined in PSSP policy and attend classes on a regular and consistent basis.
- Maintain the minimum grade point average in your courses according to the PSSP policies or the post-secondary institution's program criteria.
- Notify the Education Administrative Assistant in writing by the end of April of your academic plans for the following September.
- Provide course registration forms to the Education Administrative Assistant at the beginning of each semester.

VI. FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Gitksan extended family which includes the mother, maternal aunts and uncles take responsibility for their children's education, both informally and formally. Although it is expected that the father will be taking responsibility for his own nieces and nephews within his own Gitksan extended family, it is now common for the father to invest as much in his own children as his nieces and nephews. Student who are supported by both their maternal and paternal extended families are generally more successful not only in their post-secondary education, but in their overall lives.

VII. GITWANGAK EDUCATION SOCIETY'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Gitwangak Education Society respects the primary role played by the extended Gitksan family in matters of education. However, most families do not have the financial capacity to pay for their children's post-secondary due to poor socio-economic conditions in the community. The primary responsibility of the Gitwangak Education Society is to administer the Post-Secondary Student Support Program policy which includes administering timely financial support to approved post-secondary students who are members of the Gitwangak Band, subject to the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development policies and funding. In addition, it is our responsibility to maintain close communication with our students and the institutions that they are attending.

VIII. FISCAL TIME FRAME:

- A. The Gitwangak Education Society receives transfer payments for post-secondary education funding through a contribution agreement between the Band and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. Funds received by the Band must be disbursed within the fiscal year (April 1st to March 31st) and within the budget.
- B. Based on the May 15th application deadline, the Gitwangak Education Society normally disburses funds to students between September of the same year and April of the following year, inclusive. This time period is the normal "academic year".
- C. Applicants who wish to receive funding for Spring/Summer sessions (May to August), must receive advance approval from the Education Coordinator and continue to meet all other requirements for funding. The Spring/Summer session will be considered one (1) semester and will apply to a student's total funding years. Funds for sessions outside of the normal September to April school year may not always be available due to funding constraints.

IX. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL-TIME SPONSORSHIP:

In order to be considered for the Gitwangak Education Society Post-Secondary Student Support Program, the applicant must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- 1. Be a registered Gitwangak Band member (must provide a copy of status card – both front and back sides of the card);
- 2. The educational institution must be fully recognized and accredited.

3. High school graduates must achieve a minimum of a C+ grade point average in their Grade 11/12 courses;
4. Continuing post-secondary students must achieve:
 - i. a minimum of a C+ grade point average, in the absence of higher standards being required by the post-secondary institution, or;
 - ii. Whatever minimum grade point average the post-secondary institution dictates as the minimum standard, or;
 - iii. In the event of a conflict between the institution's policy and the Band's policy, the higher standard.
5. The minimum course-load that students must maintain is as follows:
 - i. a minimum of four (4) courses totaling a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours, or equivalent, per semester.
 - ii. a minimum of two (2) courses for students with special needs designation or with students with permanent disabilities.
6. Continuing Students must:
 - i. submit official transcripts from the post-secondary school to GES as soon as they become available, and;
 - ii. failure to provide transcripts in a timely manner, without a valid excuse (such as illness or family bereavement), may result in funds being withdrawn or withheld by the GES; and
 - iii. Submit mid-term progress reports from student's instructors at the post-secondary institute.
7. If the applicant is a new Band member who has transferred from another Band,
 - i. the applicant will not be eligible until the expiry of a two year waiting period, but
 - ii. the two year waiting period will be waived if the Band of origin transfers the appropriate PSSP funds to the GES's bank account for the transferee; and
 - iii. if the applicant previously received funding from his or her original Band, then the applicant will only be eligible for a residual number of years' funding, in compliance with our policy;
 - iv. The applicant has recourse to the **Appeals** process as stated in Section XX – pages 21-23."

X. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PART-TIME SPONSORSHIP:

All requirements for full-time sponsorship applies to those who are attending part-time studies except that students only have to be enrolled in three or less courses per semester. Students with designated special needs or permanent disability are enrolled in less than two courses per semester.

XI. ELIGIBLE PROGRAMS:

The following types of programs will be considered for funding through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program:

1. Post-Secondary programs at an accredited and recognized Post-Secondary Institution including:
 - A. programs leading to a one year certification,
 - B. programs leading to a two year diploma or Associate Degree,
 - C. programs leading to a four (or five) year Bachelor’s Degree,
 - D. programs leading to a post-graduate credential, such as an advanced diploma, Master’s degree, or PhD;
2. College preparation programs/UCEP, with the following limitations:
 - A. The program must be completed within a time frame of ten (10) months, and
 - B. the academic level of the program must be at the Grade 11/12 level.

XII. PRIORITY FOR FUNDING:

The priority for funding is as follows:

1. Continuing students based on academic achievement, attendance and progress with a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average (C+) or higher, with a minimum of four (4) complete courses (and 2 for those students who have a designated special needs or permanent disabilities) in the previous semester.
2. Recent (within the last two years) Graduating High School students with a Dogwood Certificate.
3. New Adult students (never funded before). Applicants living on Gitwagak reserve will be given first consideration for funding.

4. Re-applying – Have been funded before and are making a new application.

XIII. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. The **deadline date is May 15** for submitting the *Application Package*. This covers funding for September of that year to the end of April of the following year (the “academic year”).
2. Students must apply for admission and receive a **Letter of Acceptance** from the educational institution to which they are applying. The Letter of Acceptance must be submitted with the Application Package.
3. Students must submit all relevant Student Transcripts with the ***Application Package***.⁴
4. Items that are part of the Application Package and must be submitted:
 - A. **Letter of Intent** – a cover letter done by the student, which will:
 - briefly describe the student’s long term educational and employment goals;
 - briefly explain how the requested program will help the student achieve his/her goals, and;
 - make a request for funding that includes the funding requested such as living allowance, tuition, books and supplies.
 - B. **Program Outline** – a photocopy from institute catalogue (see definition) that lists the courses the student will be taking along: with a list of the necessary prerequisites and any special equipment or supplies needed by the student.
 - C. **Application Form (Appendix 1)** – a standard form for recording personal student information, general program information, emergency contact information, declaration of residency and student waiver.
 - D. **Letter from High School Special Needs Coordinator**: recent High School Graduates (in the past two years) must submit a letter from the High School Special Education Department that identifies the special needs and a list of recommended equipment and services that will help the student be successful throughout his/her post-

⁴ This includes high school transcripts and transcripts for any previous post-secondary courses taken by the student. Photocopies of official transcripts will be accepted.

secondary education.

- E. Letter from the Disability Resource Coordinator for Students with designated special needs or permanent disabilities: that identifies the support (equipment and other academic support) that they are going to provide to the student along with a recommended list of other equipment and supports that they are unable to provide to the student but would help the student be successful in post-secondary education. The student must submit quotes for the recommended other equipment and supports.

XIV. NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION:

1. The GES Education Administrative Assistant will notify successful applicants in writing by June 30th.
 - A. if funds are available, the successful applicant will be informed of the schedule for funds disbursements as well as the amounts to be disbursed,
 - B. if funds are not available, the successful applicant will be informed that he or she will be placed on a waiting list, and
 - C. students placed on a waiting list are responsible for periodically checking on their status on the waiting list.
2. Successful applicants will be required to sign a **Student Contract** (Appendix 2) with Education Administrative Assistant. The *Student Contract* outlines the terms and conditions of the funding agreement between the two parties (the student and the GES).
3. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing by the EAA. Such notification will outline the reasons why the applicant was not successful.
4. Unsuccessful applicants wishing to appeal the written decision must do so according to Section XX, Appeals (pages 21-23).

XIV. ELIGIBLE FUNDING SUPPORT:

The following are levels of funding, tuition support, living allowances, textbooks and supplies, support services and special equipment for students with special needs and permanent disabilities, travel assistance and tutoring is covered in this section.

1. Levels of Funding

- A. **UCEP: University College Entrance Program:** The goal of this program is to help students achieve the academic level required to successfully enter diploma or undergraduate degree programs. High School graduates are encouraged to take advantage of the UCEP program unless they have obtained a B+ or higher grade point average in high school and don't have to relocate to study (they are living in close proximity of the institution that they will be studying and won't have to adjust to being away from home and away from their families). Full-time students are eligible for up to 10 academic months of funding which are not considered as part of the undergraduate program.
- B. **Under-Graduate Level:**
- Under-graduate Programs will be funded to a maximum of 5 years (40 academic months) with a 2.0 (C+) grade point average.
 - Students cannot switch majors after the second year.
 - Upon graduation or completion of a Bachelor Degree, a student is no longer eligible for funding at the under-graduate level.
- C. **Graduate Level:**
- A student must work for 2 years after they have completed their Bachelor Degree before they make an application for funding for a Master's Degree.
 - Maximum funding that is available for a Master's Degree is two years.
 - Students will be generally considered as a part-time student and will be eligible for tuition fees, books and supplies.
 - Due to the high costs at the graduate level, students are encouraged to apply for bursaries and scholarships to assist with their overall education and living expenses.
 - Depending on availability of funding, students may qualify for full sponsorship (tuition fees, student allowance, books and supplies) if they are attending full time classes and conducting research full-time for their thesis.
- D. **Post-Graduate Level:**
- Maximum funding that is available for a Doctor's Degree is two years.
 - due to the high costs at the post-graduate level, students are encouraged to apply for bursaries and scholarships to assist with their overall education and living expenses.
 - Depending on availability of funding, students may qualify for full

sponsorship (tuition fees, student allowance, books and supplies) while they are attending classes full-time and during their research period.

Please Note: The following are ineligible for funding through the post-secondary student support program:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) does not qualify as a Post-Secondary program and is therefore not eligible for funding.
- Student who are 19 years of age – not considered legal age.

2. The rate of Tuition Support is as follows:

- A. For a recognized and accredited Canadian public educational institution, the normal rate charged by the institution, and
- B. For a private or foreign post-secondary institution, the normal rate charged (in CAD) by the nearest public Canadian institution offering a comparable program, or
- C. For a private or foreign post-secondary institution, 75% of the normal rate charged (in CAD) by the private or foreign post-secondary institution, when no comparable program is available at a public Canadian institution
- D. Eligible tuition, books and supply costs will be submitted directly to institute.

3. The Living Allowance Rates are set out in Appendix 4.

- A. The rate of living allowance for Full-time students and their dependants.
- B. Part-time students are not eligible for living allowance.
- C. The monthly living allowance is directly deposited into the student's bank account on the 27th of each month.
- D. The living allowances are expected to cover the student's normal daily living expenditures such as food, lodging, and daily travel.
- E. The monthly living allowance is not expected to cover personal debts incurred before or during the student's attendance at college or university.

4. The rate of support for Textbooks and Supplies is as follows:

- A. The GES will authorize the bookstore to bill the GES directly for the required books and supplies to a maximum of \$500.00 per semester, and
- B. Any additional funds required for textbooks and supplies, according to actual expenses, providing that the student has submitted all textbook and supply receipts to the Education Administrative Assistant.
- C. No other items than what is required will be paid.

5. **Support Services and Special Equipment for students with designated special needs and supports with permanent disabilities:** the GES may consider providing services and equipment listed in the definition section should the Disability Resource Centre not be able to provide it to the student.

6. **Travel Assistance Allowance,** between the student's usual place of residence and the educational institution (minimum distance between the two – 500 km), will be provided to a maximum of two round trips per academic year. The Travel Assistance Allowance is set out in Appendix 4 with the Allowance Rates and Incentives.
 - A. Travel must conform to the following conditions:
 - one-way travel will be provided at the beginning of the academic year from the student's usual place of residence to the educational institution attended,
 - two-way travel will be provided during the usual Christmas break, from the educational institution to the student's normal place of residence, and back again, and
 - one-way travel will be provided at the end of the academic year from the educational institution to the student's usual place of residence.
 - B. Students are responsible for making travel arrangements well in advance.
 - C. Should the student decide to drive rather than fly, the lowest of the airfare and mileage will be paid.

7. Tutoring:

- A. Generally, for first year students.
- B. Application must be made to the Education Administrative Assistant as soon as possible and mailing address and phone number.
- C. The normal rate is \$20.00 per hour to a maximum of \$500.00 per semester.

XVI. ACHIEVEMENT INCENTIVE GRANTS (is dependent on the availability of funds and will be reviewed annually):

1. Students who have obtained a grade point average of 3.0 (B+) or higher can apply for an Achievement Incentive Grant on an annual basis.
2. Achievement Incentive Grants are available at the commencement of the 2nd year of a Bachelors Program.
3. Students completing the Master's Program are eligible for a Post Graduate Incentive.

XVII. ACADEMIC PROBATION:

1. Any student not achieving a 2.0 (C+) grade point average will be placed on Academic Probation for one semester.
2. After one semester, if the student has not obtained a higher grade point average of C+ or higher, their funding will be terminated which will be reported to the Education Administrator and the GES Board of Directors at their next convened meeting.
3. If a student wants an extension, they are required to write a letter to the Education Administrative Assistant explaining why their grades have not improved and why they are requesting an academic probation extension of one or more semester(s).
4. The Education Administrative Assistant will review the student's files and determine whether or not the student should receive an extension.
5. If the Education Administrative Assistant decides to extend the academic probation for one more semester, she will notify the Education Administrator and the GES Board of Directors at the next convened meeting.
6. If the Education Administrative Assistant recommends that the student not receive an academic probation extension and that their funding be terminated, this will be reported to the Education Administrator and the GES Board of Directors at their next convened meeting.

XVIII. WITHDRAWAL:

1. A student who withdraws from post-secondary studies for medical reasons must submit a letter from their family physician to the Education Administrative Assistant in order to be considered for future funding. When the student decides to re-apply, they must demonstrate how their medical condition has been addressed and won't affect their studies.
2. A student who withdraws from post-secondary studies for academic reasons or other reasons and wants to return at a later date will be considered as a "Reinstatement".

XIX. TERMINATION OF SPONSORSHIP:

1. A student who has not improved their academic standing after being placed on academic probation.
2. Misuse of funds will ultimately result in cancellation of funding support which may jeopardize any future funding which includes:
 - A. Not attending classes regularly, handing in assignments and obtaining a grade point average of 2.0 (C+ or higher).
 - B. Not providing accurate and current marital and/or dependant(s) information.
 - C. Collecting Post-Secondary funding after withdrawing from courses that don't qualify you to be a full-time student.
 - D. Applying for a student loan, bursaries and scholarships and not claiming the funds that the GES is providing to you.
 - E. Not complying with the GES Post-Secondary Support Program policy.

XX. APPEALS (There are three levels of appeals available for students):

First level of Appeal – Education Administrative Assistant:

1. Any student or applicant who has a grievance under the Gitwangak Education Society's Post-Secondary Student Support Program Policy will submit a written appeal with all documentation directly to the Education Administrative Assistant.

Gitwangak Education Society
 Attn: Lesley Morgan, Administrator/Education Coordinator
 PO Box 280 Kitwanga, B.C. V0J 2A0

2. The Education Administrative Assistant will arrange at least one meeting with the student or applicant to discuss the appeal, within two weeks of having received the written request for appeal.
3. The Education Administrative Assistant will compile and review all pertinent information and documentation regarding the appeal. She will make a decision on the appeal and submit it in writing to the student or applicant within one week of the scheduled meeting, whether or not it occurred.
4. If the student or applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Education Administrative Assistant, s/he can request the second level of appeal in writing.

Second level of Appeal – Education Administrator:

1. Within one week of receiving the notice for a second level of appeal from the student or applicant, the Education Administrative Assistant must submit the entire appeals package and the first level of appeal decision to the Education Administrator.
2. The Education Administrator of the Gitwangak Education Society will review the appeals package as submitted by the Education Administrative Assistant.
3. The Education Administrator will arrange at least one meeting face to face or teleconference or skype call with the student or applicant to review and discuss the appeal, within two weeks of having received the *First Level of Appeals* package and decision.
4. The Education Administrator will give a written notice to the student or applicant outlining the appeal decision no later than two weeks following the scheduled meeting, whether or not the meeting occurred.
5. The Education Administrator will produce a written decision within three (3) weeks of receiving the *First Level of Appeals* package.
6. The *Second Level of Appeal* and decision must take place within seven (7) weeks of when the Education Administrative Assistant first received the written appeal.
7. If student or applicant does not agree with the Education Administrator's decision, s/he is entitled to have their written appeal reviewed by Gitwangak Education Society Board of Directors which must be done in writing.

Third and Final level of Appeal – Board of Directors of the Gitwangak Education Society:

1. The student or applicant will submit to the GES Board of Directors a written appeal and appeals package within two weeks of having received the written decision by the Education Administrator.
2. Within two weeks of having received the appeals package, the Board of Directors will organize at least one meeting face to face or teleconference or via skype, with the student or applicant to discuss the review of appeal.
3. The Board of Directors will give written notice to the student or applicant outlining the appeals decision, within two weeks of the scheduled meeting whether the meeting occurred or not.
4. Within two weeks of the scheduled meeting, the Chair of the Board will provide the student with a written decision of the Board outlining why the final appeal was or was not successful.
5. This decision will be **final** and **binding** and a copy will be put in the student or applicant's file.

Please Note: Should a student or applicant take their appeal to all three levels consecutively, the final decision must be made within 9 weeks from the time that the Education Administrative Assistant received the first written appeal from the applicant or student.

XX. REINSTATEMENT:

1. After termination by the Gitwangak Education Society, the student may be reinstated for a final chance; if the student demonstrates a serious commitment to securing a post-secondary education by:
 - A. paying education costs out-of-pocket for one semester, and;
 - B. achieving a C+ average.
2. The GES will not normally provide funding for students to repeat courses, unless exceptional circumstances warrant such funding (i.e. medical emergency supported by doctor's note).

XXII. EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY FUNDING:

1. In the event of a death or illness within the immediate family (father, mother, brother, sister), full time students are eligible to receive one return trip at the rate appropriate for travel.
2. The student must write a letter stating why emergency funding is being requested and the type of support that is being requested. The letter must be addressed to the Education Administrative Assistant.
3. The Education Administrative Assistant will make a decision and inform the student within 24 hours based on the availability of funding and emergency.
4. A copy of the decision will be put in the student's file.

XXIII. MISUSE OF GES POST-SECONDARY FUNDING SUPPORT:

1. Students are to use the funding for the specific educational purposes for which it was provided. Any student, who uses the money for a purpose other than relating directly to the student's education, commits fraud. The GES will not tolerate fraudulent behavior and such behavior may be reported to the R.C.M.P. for investigation.
2. Students or applicants are required to honestly report their true financial and academic situation when submitting an application under the Post-Secondary Student Support Program. Any deliberate attempt by the student or applicant to misrepresent his or her true financial or academic situation on an application or any interim correspondence will constitute fraud and will be grounds for termination.
3. In the event that a student drops out and receives funds (living allowance) from the Gitwangak Education Society, the student is liable to repay the full amount. Payment options can be discussed with the Education Administrative Assistant. If repayment of fees is necessary, all/any post-secondary sponsorship will be withheld until the GES has received full payment.
4. If repayment of funds has not been made a student will be not be eligible for post-secondary funding for a period of four (4) years unless repayment of funds is made sooner.

XXIV. STUDENT LOANS:

Should the student or applicant enter into any student loan agreement with the Province of British Columbia or the Government of Canada, then the student (or applicant) will be solely responsible for any liabilities incurred. The Gitwangak Education Society will not be responsible for any liabilities incurred. The Gitwangak Education Society will not be responsible for the repayment of any student loan signed under the student or applicant's name.

The Post-Secondary Student Support Budget is a limited annual budget that is determined by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada for Gitwangak Status Band Members and is administered by the Gitwangak Education Society. Unfortunately, there is always more demand by students than what is received annually however, we do our best to allocate it in a fair and equitable manner to all Band Members.

Revised on September 2013
Revised on November 2015



GES POST-SECONDARY STUDENT SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION FORM

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Last name:		First name:		Middle name:	
Status Card Number:			Date of Birth:		
Home Mailing Address (PO Box; mail will be sent to this address):					
Town/City:		Province:	Postal code:	e-Mail Address:	
Home telephone #:		Business telephone #:		Cell #:	Other telephone #:
Spouse's First Name		Spouse's Last Name		Employed?	Where?
Relationship?					
Address while attending school: (PO Box; mail will be sent to this address):					
Town/City:		Province:	Postal code:	Phone:	

DEPENDANT INFORMATION (List only your dependant spouse and the minor children you are responsible for and are living with you. Add additional page for more dependants if necessary):

1. First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):
2. First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):
3. First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):
4. First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):
5. First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year):

When claiming dependant spouse and dependant children, the following information must be submitted and the waiver must be signed:

1. T4 or INCOME TAX RETURN FROM SPOUSE
2. CHILD TAX BENEFIT FORM

WAIVER FOR CLAIMING DEPENDANTS:

I, _____ declare that the information I have given regarding my dependant(s) is current and accurate. All children listed in the Dependant Information are in my care. I understand that by providing incorrect information, it will result in a discontinuation of sponsorship.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT ACADEMIC INFORMATION (start with most recent):

Name of School	Location	Dates Attended		Program of Study	Academic Achievement	Sponsored by GES?	
		Start	End			YES	NO
I have a Designated Special Needs	YES	NO	List Special Needs Designation:				
I have a Permanent Disability	YES	NO	Identify Permanent Disability				

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Name of Program:							
Institution:							
Length of Program:		Start Date:		End Date:			
TERM	Number of Courses/Semester		Cost for Tuition		Cost for Books & Supplies		
Fall (September – December)							
Winter (January – April)							
Spring (May – June)							
Summer (July – August)							
Total Costs:							

DECLARATION OF RESIDENCY AND STATUS CARD:

I, _____ declare that I meet the Canadian Residency requirement which means that I have been a resident in Canada for 12 months immediately prior to the date of my application for GES Post-Secondary Student

Support Funding. The date of my application was on: _____. I have provided a copy of my Status Card (front and back) with my application.

STUDENT WAIVER:

I, _____ hereby give the Gitwangak Education Society permission to contact the above noted institution to inquire about all aspects of my education including attendance, assignments, exams and final marks as they are sponsoring my post-secondary education.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPLICATION INFORMATION, PERMISSION FORM:

If you wish to have someone (other than YOU, i.e. parent, spouse, etc.) speak to GES regarding your Post-Secondary Application, please complete the following permission form.

I hereby give _____ (Print Name), permission to contact and speak to the Gitwangak Education Society Administrator or Education Coordinator, regarding my application package and application status for Post-Secondary Sponsorship.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

DECLARATION OF APPLICATION:

I, _____, declare that the information that I provided is current and accurate. If I have a designated Special Needs and/or a permanent disability, I have included the letters from my High School and the Disability Resource Centre Coordinator. If anything changes on my application during the course of my studies and being sponsored, I will notify the Education Coordinator of the Gitwangak Education Society immediately. I recognize that if I provided inaccurate information on my application I can be terminated from receiving post-secondary sponsorship from the Gitwangak Education Society.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

GES POST-SECONDARY STUDENT AGREEMENT AND CONTRACT FORM

STUDENT CONTRACT

I, _____ understand and agree to the following criteria as a condition upon receiving funding through the Gitwangak Education Society Post-Secondary Student Support Program. I will

1. Maintain a Grade Point Average of C+ (2.0) or better.
2. Maintain a course load of a minimum of 4 course loads or 12 credit hours per semester, whichever is greater. (Students with a designated special needs or permanent disabilities will maintain a minimum of 2 course loads or 6 credits hours per semester, whichever is greater.)
3. Submit the following transcripts:
 - A. Fall Semester (September to December) by January 15th
 - B. Winter Semester (January to April) by May 15th
4. Maintain contact with the First Nations Education Advisor at the Institution that I am attending throughout the year, particularly if I face any academic or personal difficulties throughout the year.
5. Maintain contact with the First Nations Advisor at the Institution that I am attending throughout the year.
6. Use the funds that I receive only for the purpose for which they are intended (tuition, books, supplies, equipment, transportation and any other reasonable living expenses) and
7. Truthfully disclose all financial and academic information to the Gitwangak Education Society's Education Coordinator.
8. Agree to the release of information to the Gitwangak Education Society regarding my attendance, assignments and final course grades.
9. Agree to provide the Gitwangak Education Society with a copy of my transcripts in a timely manner as per the schedule in the policy.
10. Submit all the mandatory documents to the GES prior to May 15th, of each year.

I, _____ declare that I meet the Canadian Residency requirement which means that I have been a resident in Canada for 12 months immediately prior to the date of my application for GES Post-Secondary Student Support Funding. The date of my application was on: _____. I have provided a copy of my Status Card (front and back) with my application. I have read and understand the GES Post-Secondary Student Support Policy and agree to abide by them and I understand that the GES may randomly choose students to get an interim report from the student or the Post-Secondary Institution.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

GES AGREEMENT

I, _____ on behalf of the Gitwangak Education Society agree to provide _____ Part-Time _____ Full-Time Sponsorship to _____ as long as he/she has abided by the Post-Secondary Student Support Policy and above mentioned contractual terms. Should the student not abide by the policy and contractual terms as stipulated above, I can terminate the student's funding according to the policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**GES POST-SECONDARY
STUDENT SPONSORSHIP
BANKING FORM**

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Last name:		First name:		Middle name:	
Home Mailing Address (PO Box; mail will be sent to this address):					
Town/City:		Province:	Postal code:	e-Mail Address:	
Home telephone #:	Business telephone #:		Cell #:	Other telephone #:	

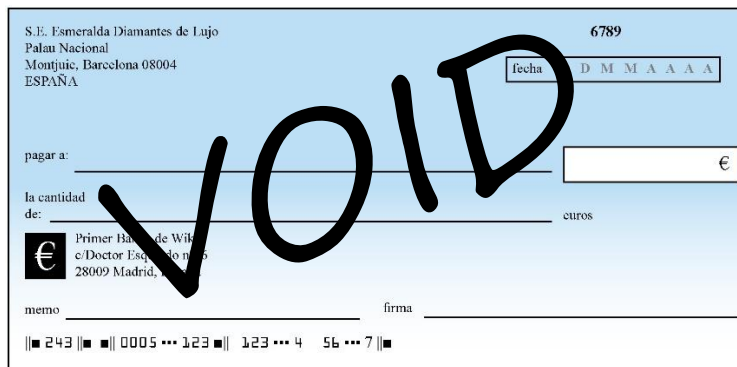
BANKING INFORMATION:

To ensure that GES receives the correct banking information and to AVOID delays:

**Please provide a VOIDED Cheque
or a
Pre-Authorized Payment Form**

I, _____ agree that my account is active and that the monthly living Allowance will be deposited directly into my bank account on the 27th of each month while I am attending school full-time and abiding by the GES Post-Secondary Student Support Policy. I also understand that I may provide the GES with a VOIDED Cheque that has all of my current banking information on it. I also understand that my banking information is strictly confidential and that it will only be used to deposit my monthly living allowance in.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



**DEADLINE FOR POST-SECONDARY
COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKAGES IS:**

MAY 15TH

OF EVERY YEAR YOU WISH TO BE SPONSORED!!

Post-Secondary Checklist; must be submitted before May 15th, late application packages will be placed on the waitlist:

1. Complete Application for Post-Secondary Sponsorship Form
2. Signed and Dated Terms of Sponsorship/Student Declaration
3. Signed and Dated Application Information, Permission Form
4. Signed and Dated Student Information Release Form
5. Signed and Dated Third Party Release of Application Form
6. If Claiming Dependent(s): Child Tax Benefit Form, and spouse's income tax return.
7. Letter of Acceptance/Confirmation of Registration (or expected date of Notification)
8. Letter of Intent
9. Copy of Indian Status Card (Both sides – Required) will NOT accept expired status cards
10. List of Program Tuition/Fees (Printed from website or faxed from institution)
11. List of Texts/Supplies Costs (Printed from website or faxed from institution)
12. Official Transcripts of Fall/Winter/Spring Semesters
13. Practicum information, only if there is a required practicum
14. Disability information
15. If Cost Sharing, Letter from the other sponsor outlining their sponsorship.

Gitwangak Education Society

PO Box 280

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F: 250-849-5607

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Like us on FaceBook: [Gitwangak Education Society](#)