

# **WEST MOBERLY FIRST NATIONS**

## **EDUCATION POLICY**

Adopted:	2010
Amended:	June 8, 2016

## **VISION**

The vision of West Moberly First Nations Education Department is to provide access to learning including “life-long learning” for all members.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the education policy is to provide incentives, awards and support to all students including tutoring, school supplies, and counseling. The role of the Education Director is to advocate for all students.

## **IMPORTANT**

This policy is completely dependent on the availability of WMFN funds. Support will be provided within the limits of the West Moberly First Nation’s financial resources designated for awards and incentives. Award values may also vary according to the revenues of the nation.

It is helpful that parents complete an authorization to release Information form so that the Education Director can contact schools to determine if students fit the criteria for attendance and achievement awards. Otherwise it is up to parents to provide this information.

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is the desire of Chief, Council and Elders of WMFN to support the success of our pre-school and kindergarten to grade 12 students as well as adults. This policy outlines how we plan to encourage this success. The following programs are meant to encourage all learners to become successful individuals and improve self-esteem. All incentives will be monitored to make sure that they do not affect our members negatively.

West Moberly First Nations will strive to provide spiritual, emotional, social, cultural, physical and academic assistance to on and off reserve students to the best of the band’s ability.

One of the best incentives to student success is a strong and positive relationship with the student, with the student’s school and with the student’s teacher. Each student will vary with regard to what makes them want to do well at school or what makes them want to attend school on a regular basis. Most elementary students are naturally interested in learning and are curious about the world. Choosing books or gifts that cater to this interest is one way of telling students that they are important and also will encourage the student to further develop their interests.

Chief and Council consider education a priority towards the nation’s goals of self-sufficiency. This policy reflects that commitment through the equitable administration of the band’s financial resources. This policy is a living document subject to revision as the requirements of students change. Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC) provide only very limited funds to on-reserve students for school supplies and tutoring. WMFN, however, strives to provide equitable support to all WMFN band members.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Chief and Council to ensure that the needs of the members are being met in an equitable and unbiased manner. Council welcomes any suggestions.

## **TUTORING**

Tutoring for on-reserve students:

Tutoring is available at the Dakii Yadze Centre for all students. An appointment is required prior to obtaining this service.

Tutoring for off-reserve students:

WMFN will set aside \$1500 per family to be approved annual for tutoring for off reserve students, but this support will also be dependent on available funds. As many schools offer tutoring support, this would be the first-avenue to explore. In order to receive tutoring support, parents are asked to complete a form available from the Education Department. Tutoring support will be offered as needed. Request for tutoring may come from a parent or form a school. A discussion will also be had with the student to determine his or her point of view with regard to his or her school situation. Payment for tutoring will be made directly to a suitable tutor.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS and PROTOCOLS**

The Education Director will monitor the academic progress of all off-reserve and on-reserve students (if we have been authorized to do this on an authorization to release information form) in order to encourage academic success as follows:

1. Regular visits to the school to meet with the students, teachers and counselors.
2. Development of career and personal goals with students and families at the beginning of each school year and in January.
3. Advocate for students.
4. The Education Director will develop a relationship with the First Nations liaisons and principals and ask for regular feedback regarding student progress.
5. The Education Director will develop a working relationship with the parents / guardians to keep the lines of communication open and to offer any assistance as needed.
6. The Education Director will attend PAC meetings and Aboriginal Education Advisory Council meetings and communicate relevant information to parents.
7. The Education Director will encourage parents to attend PAC and Aboriginal Education Advisory Council meetings.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

WMFN will support K-12 students by providing financial help for school supplies. A form will be sent out to parents so that they can apply for this support. An authorization to release form will also be sent out to parents. This form will determine whether or not you wish the Education Department to have access to your students' records. If a student does not return to school but has received a school supply cheque, this cheque must be returned to West Moberly First Nations. If this cheque is not returned, the parent will be considered in debt to WMFN and will not be eligible for benefits such as the Christmas bonus.

Chief and Council will determine on a yearly basis whether on and off reserve and community members will be eligible for this support

## GRADUATION

If a student is graduating, WMFN will support costs for dry grad and graduation fees as determined by the school to a maximum of \$500. This support will be offered to students once.

### MID-TERM and END of YEAR AWARDS

Awards are distributed to WMFN band member high school and elementary students to celebrate their success and good attendance at the end of the school year. A second award will be offered in January if funds are available.

For elementary students, (K to Grade 7), a monetary gift valued at \$50 will be issued to students who have attended school at least 70% of the school year.

Students (Grades 8 to 11) must have attended at least 70% of the entire school year and have passed all of their courses with a 65% average in order to receive an award. The award will be a monetary gift valued at \$80.

### HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AWARDS

Students leaving high school are eligible for one of the following two awards:

For a school-leaving certificate:	\$250
For a Dogwood diploma	\$500

The students must submit a copy of their certificate to the Education Department in order to receive the award.

### POST-SECONDARY AWARDS

WMFN recognizes the significant time a student invests in attaining higher education. We applaud the awesome effort it takes to graduate from a post-secondary program.

Upon successful completion of one of the following programs, a student can receive one of the following awards:

Adult Dogwood Certificate	\$ 500
Certificate Program	\$ 500
Diploma Program	\$ 1,000
Bachelors Program	\$ 2,000
Masters Program	\$ 3,000
Doctorate Program	\$ 4,000

Students who have previously received a High School Leaving Certificate and who have attended post-secondary school to achieve an Adult Dogwood will only be eligible to receive \$250.

In order to receive a Certificate Program Award, the certificate program must be accredited and have been more than six months in length on a full-time basis.

The student must submit a copy of their certificate to the Education Department in order to process the award.

Please note that all awards will be given based on available funds.

## **COUNSELLING**

In circumstances where personal difficulties are impairing a student's academic performance, the parents, guardians, or the student can request assistance from the Education Director. This may include personal counseling.

## **YOUTH EDUCATION ENRICHMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

This is a merit-based award intended to provide funding assistance for youth band members who wish to attend a private boarding school to obtain an enriched high school education that provides a more challenging program of studies needed to develop their potential.

### Scholarship Amount

Total amount available to applicants for this scholarship shall be determined annually as per WMFN Education Department budget approved by Council and is entirely dependent upon availability of local funding.

Annual allocation shall be divided equally between successful scholarship applicants.

### Qualification Criteria

Applicants for this scholarship must be:

- WMFN band members
- Full-time, non-adult students
- Attending grades eight through twelve
- Supported by signed documentation from certified teaching professionals establishing that the applicant's academic and/or artistic achievements warrant an enriched program of studies leading to high school graduation

### Selection Procedure

A selection panel shall consist of a minimum of three panelists including:

1. At least one WMFN Council member (or his or her designate) where no conflict of interest is involved.
2. A provincially certified teaching professional (if possible); otherwise, one or more WMFN Department Managers.
3. The WMFN Education Manager.

Where there are multiple applicants, selection of recipients shall be made by secret ballot and determined by majority vote. The Education Manager will abstain from such voting unless there is a tied vote.

Where there is only one applicant, selection shall be made by open majority vote. The Education Manager will abstain from such voting unless there is a tied vote.

Scholarship applicants will be notified by the Education Manager of the status of their application within ten (10) working days following the selection panel's decision.

### Obligations of Recipients

A parent or legal guardian of an applicant awarded this scholarship must sign a *Scholarship Funds Responsibility Agreement* acknowledging their responsibility to ensure that all scholarship funds received will be applied to expenses involved with the recipient's education program (as identified in their scholarship application).

If a recipient of this scholarship withdraws from or fails to complete their registered education program by the scheduled completion date of their program, their parent or legal guardian who signed the Scholarship Funds Responsibility Agreement must repay to West Moberly First Nations' Finance Department the full amount of the scholarship awarded.

Scholarship recipients who experience an emergency situation (as defined below) may apply to the WMFN Education Department for an extension of the time available to complete their program, provided that they are granted additional program completion time by their education program provider. If an emergency situation results in the termination of the scholarship recipient's program, repayment of the scholarship will be waived.

Emergency Situations: a student or members of their immediate family have been affected by bereavement, life-threatening accidents and/or life-threatening illness which are subsequently verified through documentation obtained from medical professionals involved in the emergency and submitted to the WMFN Education Manager.

"Immediate family" is defined as a band member's parents, children, siblings, grandparents as well as step relationships, and any relative permanently residing in their household or with whom they reside. Additionally, if a band member is married or is in a common-law relationship, immediate family also includes their spouse (opposite-sex or same-sex) as well as -in-law relationships.

**REVIEWED & RECOMMENDED**

This WMFN Education Policy has been reviewed and approved by a quorum of Council on [June 8, 2016], coming into force on [June 8, 2016]. Note: original policy developed in 2010.

Dejarlais Family Councilor: Laura Webb

Dokkie Family Councilor: Dean Dokkie

Brown Family Councilor: Patricia Brown

Miller Family Council: Clarence Wilson

This policy has been reviewed and amended by a quorum of Council:

June 8, 2016
